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METUCHEN AND HER HISTORY,

AND

THE CHURCHES OF METUCHEN.

A HISTORICAL SKETCH,

AS GIVEN IN TWO ADDRESSES,

BY

EZRA M. HUNT, M.D.,

April 14th and April 16th, 1870.

NEW YORK:
FISK, RUSSELL & AMES, PRINTERS, 63 DUANE STREET.
1870.

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NEW JERSEY

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To the Citizens of Metuchen, at whose request and expense this Historical Sketch is transferred to print, it is respectfully dedicated, by their friend, the Author.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1870, by EZRA M. HUNT, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the U. S. for the District of New Jersey.

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METUCHEN AND HER HISTORY.

Before our village shall have arrived at dimensions which would complicate the work of tracing its history, and ere the statements and traditions of those in whose memories many of the reminiscences of the past are treasured have been forgotten, it seems proper that what is authentic, interesting and valuable should be gathered in such form as to be available to those who come after us and serve to gratify that laudable inclination which most individuals and communities have to recall and perpetuate the historic associations of the vicinity in which their lot is cast.

Situated as our town has been, in portions of two townships, the settlements in these were so correlative to, and connected with that of our own neighborhood, that a reference to them furnishes the proper introduction to what is more specific and local.

Lord Carteret having obtained grant and power over this part of the Jerseys, sent hither his brother, afterward Governor Carteret, to manage the same in his own way.

Carteret arrived here from England in the fall of 1665, with about thirty others, including servants. He went, the next season, to New England,* "where he so recommended his plan of government and promised the people so much if they would go with him," that he caused a large number to follow him—chiefly from two places in New England—and these are the ones from which came the original settlers of Woodbridge and Piscataway townships. In accord with an agreement made December, 1666,† the Charter for the Township of Woodbridge was granted June 1st, 1669, and included an area of six miles square, which would make its boundary in this direction nearly the same as since. Many of the settlers had come the year before, but titles for lands within the bounds of the township were given "principally in the year 1670"—just two hundred years ago. Among the seventy who at, or near that time, acquired title for lands, we find names still familiar among us, such as Ayres, Blomfield,

*See diary of Jasper Donkers and Peter Sluyter, who traveled through here, 1679–80. The original manuscript is published by the Long Island Historical Society, 1867.

† See Whitehead's "Contributions to East Jersey," to which I am here and often indebted.

Conger, Compton, Toppan, Clarkson or Clawson, Martin, etc. Two hundred acres were assigned "for the Ministry," and one hundred acres "for the maintenance of schools."

These original settlers were therefore from New England, and most of them from the town of Newbury, Mass., thirty-four miles north-east of Boston. The graves of the ancestry of the Ayres, Toppans, and others may still be found there. Our township was named after the Rev. John Woodbridge, of Newbury.

Piscataway was chiefly settled by a colony from Piscatqua, near the Maine and New Hampshire line, by a grant dated December, 1666—the same month as the agreement made with the first settlers of Woodbridge. Donkers and Sluyter, the missionary travelers before refered to, speak of both Woodbridge and Piscataway as English villages, for not only were they settled by persons from New England, but their settlements there had been made only about thirty or thirty-five years before by English people.

This, you will remember, was not many years after the landing of the Pilgrim Fathers (1622). I have not been able to ascertain that any of our forefathers actually came over in the Mayflower, which, according to the claims of ancestry, seems to have been a very crowded boat. I doubt not, however, that some of the Newbury and Piscataqua people had seen some of the original immigration, and there is a little tradition that one cause of the settlements here was that some of our good ancestors became a little tired of the exacting strictness of their predecessors, and concluded to come where they could express themselves more freely.

Most of these early settlers were persons of character, imbued with Christian principles, recognizing their dependence upon the blessing of God, and seeking by frugality and industry to promote the interests of their families and society at large.

Among those for whom land was surveyed in Piscataway up to 1690, we find the familiar names of Bonham, Dunn, Dunham, Fitz-Randolph, Giles, Martin, Maning and Mundaye. Of these the Bonhams, Dunns, Dunhams, Martins and Manings were from New England. Luther Martin, the famous lawyer of Maryland, and one of the founders of Clio Hall, College of New Jersey, was of this ancestry.

Nicholas Bonham, from whom Bonhamtown has its name, died in 1683.

We are not to overlook another source from which a large immigration to our own immediate section was derived at an early period. In Scotland, and among Protestants and dissenters in Ireland, these were days that tried men's souls. Many were banished, or thought it wise to seek refuge in a land of larger liberty, and Amboy was at this period a prominent landing point.

We know that a Protestant company from Tipperary, in Ireland,

settled in Piscataway in 1683. It is not possible to determine with exactness the particular party of immigrants to which each of the earlier names belonged. I think from circumstantial evidence, that the names Mundaye, Payne, Kelly, Laing, Morris, Noe, Daniels, Freeman, Ross, Talmage, Foard, Thornal, were of this descent, or of those who, impelled by similar motives, arrived with other bands of Scotch and Scotch-Irish refugees.

The name of Nicholas Mundaye appears as an owner of land in Piscataway in 1686, and one of the same name appears as a pew-holder of the Presbyterian church here in 1794. This family probably lived on the Vineyard Road, not far from the New Brunswick Turnpike. Moses Martin, who died several years since at an age past ninety, told me that the first of the Mundy name here was said to have come from the West Indies. If so, this would trace him as of those exported thither by the English Government for so-called treason in matters of religion, and in holding "conventicles." Scot, who chartered the "Henry and Francis," which arrived at Amboy in 1685, asked the transfer to him of a large number of persons who had been banished to Jamaica, and twelve were granted him, and others probably came before and afterward.

The name of Martin occurs both in the colony which came from New Hampshire and also among the passengers of the "Henry and Francis." The name as occurring in Woodbridge was probably that of a settler from Amboy, while most of those in Piscataway are of the New Hampshire descent, John Martin being the first one named in the original grant. The farm, at present owned by Wm. R. Martin, on the Turnpike, and near the Vineyard Road, has been in possession of the family for about two hundred years. Before this the Parkers had settled in Woodbridge from Staten Island, and the Rowlands from Long Island. The farm quite near here, until recently sold, had been in possession of that family over two hundred years.

In a pamphlet published in Edinburgh in 1683, by the "Scots proprietors" having interests here, "for the information of such as may have a desire to transport themselves or their families hither," seven towns are mentioned as already established, namely, Shrewsbury, Middletown, Bergen, Newark, Elizabethtown, Woodbridge and Piscataway. They are declared to be "well inhabited by a sober and industrious people, who have necessary provision for themselves and familes, and for the comfortable entertainment of travelers and strangers."

Some other names of our early settlers it is not difficult to trace directly to the Amboy arrivals.

Lord Neil Campbell, brother of the Earl of Argyle, and like him obnoxious to the English Government, was obliged to flee from Scotland and embarked for East Jersey, and landed at Perth Amboy

about December, 1685. Many of the Campbells came about the same time or accompanied him, as is shown by a list of the passengers of the "Henry and Francis," and some settled in this neighborhood. John Campbell, son of Lord Neil Campbell, died at Amboy 1689, leaving two daughters and one son, named John Campbell, "of whose descendants," says Whitehead, "I have no knowledge." The oldest stone in the old grave-yard here, so far as I know, is that of John Campbell, who died in 1731, aged seventy-two years. Next to his is the grave of Neil Campbell, who died in 1777, aged forty-three. The name here is of this stock and kin. The present Duke of Argyle, so eminent in statesmanship, in philosophy, and in exemplary character, is of this lineage.

The Craiges, Edgars, Jacksons, and probably the Hamptons and Potters, were of this same Scottish faith, and like the Scotch-Irish families before named, preferred banishment to that unlawful authority which attempted to govern them in matters of conscience.

The Ackens, Crowells, Carmans, and the "Manings" of the Maning Thornal family, were among those who came to Amboy in the famous "Caledonia" during the Scottish troubles of 1715. All these were Presbyterian Covenanters.

With such settlements from New England, Scotland and Ireland, it can be said of us as truly as it has been said with other reference, that we too had the "wheat of three kingdoms," and thus furnished, had vouchsafed to us foundation material most hopeful and substantial.

The settlers about Woodbridge village maintained religious worship, although the church was not instituted until 1792. Town and church matters were so united, after New England custom, that our people here were in both alike identified with them, except such as were included in Piscataway. The Baptist church in Piscataway was established in 1680, and this too was part and parcel of "town affairs," and was voted about and provided for at "town meetings," like other material interests.

The first Seventh-Day Baptist congregation in New Jersey had its meeting-house above New Durham at the head of the Amboy and Boundbrook Turnpike, which passes through this village. Its formation is said to have resulted from a discussion between one Mr. Bonham and a minister named Durham as to the proper day to be observed. After the meeting-house was removed toward Newmarket, some of the Bonham family settled among those of their faith in Shiloh, West Jersey, where the name still obtains; and I have somewhere been told that Bonham, Texas, owes its name to a branch of this family. I have noted this fact because the name Bonhamtown makes these accessory incidents of interest to us, as being derived from this family. The wife of Jacob Ayres, whose descendants are still among us, had Bonham as her maiden name.

The name Metuching was applied to the section of country bounded by the Short Hills on the north, by Piscataway on the west, by the Raritan on the south, and by Rahway on the East, without any very precise limits of territory. Local names, such as those of Pumptown, Allentown, Bonhamtown, were sometimes used, but this was the general appellative, and the church was always known as the Metuching Meeting-house. There is reason to believe that the name was more distinctly applied to the region between where Mr. Greason's house now is and the Oak tree neighborhood. I have in my possession a deed executed in 1811, in which a certain piece of land beyond Pumptown is described as on the road leading from Metuchen to Bonhamtown. As more business was done in that direction than here, it is not surprising that the name was prominently applied to that vicinity. All these smaller towns are now included in the village of Metuchen.

As to the origin of the name, I think there can be but little question. History acquaints us with the fact that there were many Indian tribes in New Jersey. The early settlers about Orange and Newark purchased the land from the Indians, and the adjacent name of Rahway is quite traceable to an Indian origin. I have it from Mr. Compton, now seventy-eight years of age, that his father told him that in his earlier years there were several Indian families hereabouts, and contemporary history confirms the fact. The Indians of New Jersey were divided among twenty kings, of whom the king of the Raritans was the greatest.* His domain reached all along the valley of the Raritan, of which our section was regarded as a part. It is a uniform tradition that a local leader called Metucheon had his camp in this section, and is probably buried on the farm now occupied by Lebbeus Ayres. Indian arrows, axes and utensils from time to time plowed up in this locality seem to attest the fact of a former encampment there. No one is so old as to remember the chief, but he probably belonged to the period between 1650 and 1700. The name "Squaw Field," which from time immemoral has attached to a part of the Strong farm, would seem to point to some circumstance in early Indian history; but as at that time the doctrine of Homestead Exemption and Female Rights had not become fully developed, we scarcely suppose that the lady aforesaid had a separate dowry. General Ezra A. Carman is quite confident that he has seen the name Metuchen appended to a deed among the papers of the N. J. Historical Society. A hypothesis has been entertained that the name is an Indian term for "rolling land," in reference to the undulating character of the country. I have been able to trace this tradition to a branch of Fred-

* See foot-note in address of Rev. Mr. Cowen, of Millstone, 1866.

erick Mundy's family, so that it is not the mere pleasant fancy that it was once viewed by some to be.

It was not uncommon in ancient times, and still is not in formative states of society, to designate a leading individual by the name of his locality, and I am under the impression from all that I can gather, that this section had received its name from the Raritans because of its "short hill," undulating character, and that the recog nized head Indian of the neighborhood was by them designated by the Indian name of this locality as Metucheon, or chief of the rolling land.

In a pamphlet on Indian traditions, published (1868) by Rev. N. N. Jones, called Indian Bulletin No. 2, kindly furnished to me by George Tait, Esq., there is the following record :

"Ma-touch-in, much rise up, much hill, from *mach*, much, and *tahshinumuk*, lifted up. Or mut, from *amut*, a hill, and *ish* or *oush*, intensive, having the sense of high—high hill. It is said to be the highest spot between New York and Trenton. Its natural scenery is the most attractive of any on the route from New York to Philadelphia."

Mr. Jones, who has visited me since this address was given, informs me that he arrived at his conclusion as to the meaning without at all knowing the opinion here, but simply from a study and analysis of Indian words, and is thoroughly satisfied that it has its origin in the rolling or "short-hill" character of the landscape.

This derivation almost settles the origin of the name as claimed by many, and yet does not contradict the tradition which I have traced very far back, that the local Indian chief was called by the name of this locality.

When I was in the army an odd story as to the name was told me by Col. Josiah Simpson, U. S. A., Medical Director at Baltimore, and he had it from the venerable Col. W. Scott, of New Brunswick. Soon after the Turnpike from New York to New Brunswick was opened, a robbery of a horse and carriage occurred at the Cedars, near New Brunswick, and two men followed in pursuit. After riding three or four miles along this road, they met a traveling Frenchman and inquired of him whether he had met with a man driving a carriage in haste. The poor Frenchman could only understand the word "met," and so replied "met-tu-chien," which in Canada French is "met two dogs." Over and over again did they try to make the Frenchman understand, but his constant and vociferous reply was, "met-tu-chien." Coming at length to a store and a public house with a similar sign, they at once concluded this to be the place about which the traveler had talked. It is what Dickens might call "a remarkable coincidence;" but we are quite sure Metuchen is neither dog-French nor dog-Latin, but genuine Indian aboriginal.

It is so distinctive, that Methuen, the name of a manufac-

turing town in Massachusetts, is the only one on our continent at all resembling it.

An effort in 1867 to change it did not meet with public approval, and although the word has in it more of strength than euphony, we will garland it with the poetry of Indian romance, and when we come to be a city will sound it as gracefully as ever does Longfellow his Mandamin and Wenonah, his Hiawatha and Algonquin.

As to the spelling of the name, the authority is manifold but contradictory. The Indian antiquarian already referred to gives the form Matouchin, and this is the more usual Revolutionary and early Gazetteer orthography. In the old church books the uniform spelling up to 1800 is Metuching, but afterward there are many variations. Most old deeds seem to have taken the privilege of shortening the "ing" into "en," which quite conforms to the habit if not the idiom of our language. Of words pronounced like this "in" is not the most usual termination, and so if we change it at all we will spell it like Heaven and call it Metuchen.

This form was always used by such good authorities as Simeon Mundy and Ezra Ayres, and as the form of the first post-office register and of the first railroad sign at Campbell's Station, it may well be accepted as the best uniform orthography.

And now having found out what our name is and how to spell it—two of the earliest efforts one can make toward intelligent recognition—we are prepared to proceed to other matters of history.

In our early colonial period there is little for extraordinary record. An industrious and moral society followed those avocations which developed the soil and supplied the then existing wants of community, and when great subjects of political bearing came to be discussed, the first printing-press in New Jersey—that of James Parker at Woodbridge—did not fail to acquaint the good people of our vicinity with the character of the questions at issue. Woodbridge township was even at this period an influential part of East Jersey, and Piscataway town was at one time the county seat of Middlesex and Somerset Counties (see Thomas' Gazetteer). In the first legislative assembly held in 1668, Woodbridge township was represented.

You will remember that as early as 1765 a Colonial Congress assembled in New York, and declaring their grievances, protested against the Stamp Act, and claimed the right of regulating their own taxes. It is recorded that the "Sons of Liberty" of Woodbridge and Piscataway took the lead, in 1765–6, in several of the prominent measures of the day, and it was through their interference mainly, that William Coxe, of Philadelphia, was led to decline the office of Stamp Distributor for New Jersey. A deputation from them to that gentleman, while instructed to treat him with great deference and respect, bore to him a communication to the effect

that, "a week's delay in resigning the office would render a visit from them in a body necessary, and produce results mutually disagreeable."*

These and like protests compelled Stamp officers to resign, and the Act itself was soon after repealed.

During the period of our Revolution there is incidental evidence that this region and its people fully shared in all the privations and perils to which New Jersey and its inhabitants were greatly subjected.

It is not forgotten by you that the period of 1776, after the Declaration of Independence, was especially one of disaster and defeat. After the unfortunate conflict of August 27th, 1776, on Long Island, and after the disasters of White Plains and Fort Washington, and the evacuation of Fort Lee, (November 20th, 1776,) our broken army hastened its retreat by way of Newark, Bonhamtown and New Brunswick to Trenton, and could afford no protection to our people. We were left at the mercy of the British forces, and under these circumstances had but little hope from the exultant English and the hired Hessians, ready to exercise the rights of victors and to despoil both the land and the people.

So dispirited, broken and completely routed did Lord Cornwallis regard the American forces at the time of their retreat through the Jerseys, that he considered the rebellion crushed, and proceeded to New York to take the first vessel to England.

Lord Howe was also in New York, and with British and Hessian troops scattered through New Jersey from the Hudson to the Delaware, was waiting for the freezing of the river for the purpose of crossing, and, as Cornwallis termed it, "bagging the fox in the morning."†

But it was our own glorious band of patriots that did the bagging, and by the capture of the Hessians near Trenton, (December 25th, 1776,) and the battle of Princeton a few days after, revived the drooping hopes of our fathers. British troops were now stationed at Perth Amboy, in those old buildings of colonial times still known as "the Barracks," and for a time there was also a camp at Bonhamtown, now so much a part of our own village.

After the successes of Trenton and Princeton, it was the policy of Washington to retrace his course through New Jersey, and May 28th, 1777, he took position with his army in the rear of Plainfield and along the line of hills so plainly seen to our north, and from points such as Washington Rock he and his officers, with vigil eye, watched the whole region of country reaching toward the encampments of the British forces, at and adjacent to Perth Amboy.

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* See Whitehead's History.

† See Davidson's address, Feb. 22, 1867, and Whitehead's Correspondence.

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The entire road through Woodbridge, Bonhamtown and Piscataway was guarded by British troops, and from various points scouts were sent out and raids were made. The crossing and the recrossing, and the skirmishing of detachments of either army through this immediate neighborhood occurred with alarming frequency, and our people suffered much from fear, foraging and personal molestation.

Five regiments of British troops were stationed at Bonhamtown, the officers taking possession of a house where Mr. Benjamin Tappen now lives, and, without due notice, dispossessing its owner, the grandfather of Jerome Ross

At one time we have the record that "Lord Howe, for the purpose of drawing Washington from the heights, crossed from Perth Amboy to Staten Island, while part of the Continental army hung on the rear of the British and inflicted considerable loss on the retiring foe. Howe suddenly recrossing, (June 25th, 1777,) and marching rapidly to gain the Short Hills, General Sterling struck his forces at Matouchin Church, and detaining the enemy, skirmished with his entire line. Lord Cornwallis pressed forward with another detachment, but his advance was disputed at Quibbletown, (now Dunellen,) and again on the Westfield road, and the feint at Bonhamtown proved a failure. The British commander again outgeneraled, and his army again outmarched, fell back to Amboy. A marauding party sent out by Cornwallis was routed at Spanktown, (now Rahway,) and indeed almost every cross-road within a circuit of twenty miles from this spot was the scene of conflict between the American forces and the common enemy—Elizabethtown, Springfield, the Short Hills, etc., witnessed the valor and triumph of our forces."*

My maternal grandfather, Ezra Mundy, who was born near Oak Tree school-house, and who, after retiring from business in New York City, settled in this section, used to love to amuse me by stories as to some of these chasings and encounters; and not unfrequently the loyal farmers, by watch and plot, helped to decoy and entrap the cavalry of the enemy. He has told me that he well remembered, when a child, being in an old barn near Oak Tree school-house with numbers of women and children who had fled there for safety while a detachment of British troops was passing from the shore toward the mountains. His father being in service, he was taken thither by his mother, and while playing with other children his attention was arrested by a woman who said to another, "how little these children know of our danger." Soon after a cannon-ball passed through the building and hushed even them to silence. The hiding-place was not discovered, and so they escaped unharmed.

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* See "Civil War in America," and "General Howe's Letters."

On a window-pane of the east room in the house now occupied by Benajah Kelley, near Oak Tree, is still to be seen the following record, cut into the glass:

"Capt. Wm. Thompson arived at this house from New York 10th Day of october 1775 and with sorrow and harts Distress he many days hear spent much. . . ."

Above it is the name of John Cutter, also. It is probable that this was once used as a guard house by the British, and prominent prisoners of war were here temporarily detained.

The grandfather of Henry Compton, and brother of Samuel Compton's father, lived by the brook between here and Bonhamtown, and soon after the British made encampment there, finding that he had two sons in the army, they took possession of his six horses, thirty head of cattle, and fifty sheep, gave him the venerable old grey horse and a wagon, and telling him to put on board his bed, furniture and family, gave him just time to leave before setting fire to the buildings.

The father of Henry Campbell, Sr., then lived where the grandson now lives, opposite the house of Mr. Greason, and by one of these scouting parties he was taken from a sick bed, placed on horseback behind a cavalryman, and conveyed to the encampment at Bonhamtown. Soon after, the British were compelled to make sudden retreat toward New Brunswick, and as they were going through the cedars this side of the bridge, he escaped and found his way to the house of a friend in Piscataway town.

Just after Mr. Campbell was captured, some of the neighbors went out as a spy corps, to see if they could in any way get trace of him. They were on foot, and being discovered by the British cavalry, were chased to what is now the corner of the old grave-yard lot, but there leaving the main road, they cut across the low ground, where the horses of their pursuers mired, and they being out of rifle-shot made good their escape.

Annoyances such as the presence of hostile armies and frequent skirmishes always inflict, continued until nearly the close of the war, detachments of both armies being often in this section.

So late as June, 1780, we have a record of an attack upon General Greene, who was stationed among the Short Hills, and soon after the British retreated from Perth Amboy, Woodbridge, Rahway, Elizabeth and New Jersey generally, by way of Staten Island.

We need seek no further into our portion of home Revolutionary history than thus to know that the citizens generally were loyal to the interests of freedom, and bore with fortitude the many molestations to which the proximity of armies subjected them.

Our forefathers no doubt welcomed the return of peace with all the more gladness because of these exposures—really more harrassing, and requiring more patriotism than that active participation in conflict which some of them shared. They seem soon to have set themselves, with manly industry, to the replenishing of their empty purses and the improvement of their foraged farms, that the homes for which they had suffered might be adorned with thrift and comfort, and that by vigorously adding to the material productions of the new nation, they might secure the highest blessings of a blood-bought and peril-endured freedom.

Could you have stood upon Prospect Hill on some May-day morning of the year 1800, and taken a survey of this whole region,

you would have seen the same beautiful valley, with the range of blue hills to the north, with the Raritan river and bay to the south, and with the picturesque and undulating variety of slope and dale to the east and the west, surrounding the leveler intermediate plateau; but how different the roads, the people, the houses and the landmarks. Not a building is now standing which you then would have recognized, and the old brown head-stones of the old grave-yard are the only unchanged erections and silent mementoes of the past.

The Turnpike road from New York to Philadelphia, where it passes through our village, now known as Middlesex Avenue, had not yet been made, and the Turnpike from Perth Amboy, which passes under the railroad bridge, and so on to New Durham, was still a part of the fields.

The only access from Piscataway was either by the Bonhamtown road or by that running by Campbell Tappen's and coming out by the house of Ellis F. Ayres.

The old Woodbridge road passing the Presbyterian Church was the route both to Woodbridge and Perth Amboy. The town we now call Metuchen was really a place with one main road, reaching from the Short Hills to Bonhamtown, intersected here only by the Piscataway road near the house of Ellis F. Ayres, by the Woodbridge road opposite the old grave-yard, and then running on to the Bonhamtown road, which was the thoroughfare route between Philadelphia and New York, over which Washington had passed on his way to his inauguration as President, and which was a chief post-road of the State.

At the south-east end of the old grave-yard stood the Presbyterian meeting-house, of which the Rev. Henry Cook was the pastor, On the corner opposite lived a man of the name of Mundy, who. although not addicted to cowardice, was once somewhat startled by a ghost. One night he heard a strange noise, and looking out of his window, saw a white object in the grave-yard moving to and fro, with an occasional suppressed groan. It really seemed as if some spirit was abroad, and though at first hesitating, he concluded to make advance upon it. With due preparation, he betook himself through the darkness to the spot, and as he approached, still unable to discern what it meant, he could only see that the being retreated not at his coming, but swayed up and down as if loooking out from a grave and then withdrawing into it. Summoning new courage, he marched up to the spot and found that a grave had caved in and that a stray sheep had fallen into the pit and, unable to extricate himself, could only signal his trouble by stretching his head ever and anon above the surface. The ghost was relieved from his dilemma, and the story lives to show how many a grave-yard apparition of human form and spirit has no better basis in fact.

Between the point now occupied by Edgars & Acken's store and the road which comes out by Ellis F. Ayres' house, there were but five houses.

The nearest school-houses were a log building facing the Vineyard road; one near the first bridge above Pumptown, and another where the Lafayette school-house now stands. The mill stood on the brook toward Bonhamtown, near the bridge adjacent to the house of Samuel Lafarge. The chief store of those parts was kept near the Oak Tree, on the place now occupied by Benajah Kelly, by Major Carman, the father of M. F. Carman, and the maternal grandfather of Governor Randolph, the present Governor of our State. It was a depot between the up-country and river trade, to which came the great farm wagons of the upper counties laden with grain, butter, wool, flax, etc., and received in return the various articles of merchandise. The business then done at that point was greater than is now transacted by any one store of our place. Major Carman, about 1803, sold the building for a hat factory and removed to New Brunswick. Ezekiel Ayres kept a hotel near where Howard Ayres now resides, and the famous pump at which travelers watered their horses gave to the place the name of Pumptown.

In the house, since enlarged, and now occupied by the Misses Deborah and Eunice Bonham Ayres, lived a Mrs. Allen, and on it was a sign, "'Allentown'—Cake and Beer sold here." Between the long meeting which, according to New England custom, was held morning and afternoon, with half an hour or an hour intermission, it was not unusual for the young men to get a ginger cake and a glass of beer at this famous restaurant. Some, however, of the older people brought a lunch with them, and at a little later period some one took up the plan of driving to the meeting-house, just as the first meeting was out, with some plain refreshments. In these days women as well as men sometimes rode to church on horseback, and now and then voted at town elections as was their privilege.

Miss Deborah Ayres, our oldest inhabitant, was born in 1780, near where Mr. Christol's house now is, and where her grandfather then lived. He built there a blacksmith shop, that her father might learn the trade, which he did, and after a time moved the shop to where John Talmage now resides, and lived there until his death, in 1836.

Benajah Campbell occupied the house where Samuel Durham now lives, but it then stood over in the field a little to the south-west of that point. He was trustee of the Vineyard school, and Ezra Ayres once told me that, having finished his arithmetic, and being a fair penman, when about fifteen years of age, in the scarcity of teachers, Mr. Campbell invited him to take charge of the school, but not thinking he had learning enough for that, he declined.

Doctor Melancthon Freeman, who lived on the Ezra Mundy place beyond Pumptown, was the chief doctor, and Dr. Nathan Martin, the grandfather of Gershom Martin, who lived near the present residence of C. C. Poole, also shared the practice.

With these items as to roads, church, shops, stores, school-houses, and a few residences, and with the addition of a half dozen small farm-houses within the circuit of a mile, and mostly reached by lanes or short roads, you can easily picture to yourself the Metuchen of 1800 in its undeveloped infancy—having a good character, but not very much of it, and though having some germs of its future, not as yet having started into any very demonstrative development. Indeed, Oak Tree and Bonhamtown were its more stirring suburbs. The church had been built centrally between the two, to accomodate both, and the parts of Piscataway toward New Durham, and only a very little village had begun to nucleate here. The good old times had not yet fully passed away; farming had not become an antiquated and homespun thing; butter was nine pence a pound, eggs six pence a dozen—and a baker's dozen at that—and buckwheat cakes and honey didn't give old-fashioned stomachs the dyspepsia. The great brick oven burned up all the old posts and rails on the farm, and furnished home-made bread not baked in a pan; milk was too cheap to sell; farmers, unlike doctors, did their own killing and curing, and a lamb from the flock or a calf from the stall was easily changed about among the neighbors, so that neither baker, milkman or butcher needed to make their daily rounds; the wide fire-place, which would take in half a tree for a back log, blazed away without any thoughts as to the price of wood and coal, and gas-burners had not yet reported. Linen was cheap, and collars high enough to reach up to the hat and keep out the cold; linsey-woolsey had partly disappeared, but many a farmer's daughter curtsied in her becoming calico, and many a successful sparking was had by the embers of a Franklin fire and the dull light of a tallow candle, nuts, apples, doughnuts, mince pie and a mug of cider being passed around between ten and twelve o'clock. One did not then have to bow in "tights," at an angle of over 45°, and study up on the latest novel, and know the difference between a piano-forte and a melodeon, in order to be considered intelligent enough for matrimony, and was not so much in danger as now of being considered familiar because of a smacking salutation. But somehow I know of good matches made in those days, and I must give it as my opinion, (non-professional,) that at least a medium between these ancient habits and modern formality would be more conducive to family ties and not cause so many young gentlemen to postpone propositions out of sheer embarrassment, and from that modesty so characteristic of our sex.

The next quarter of a century—from 1800 to 1825—wrought

some important changes in this vicinity. At this period, the construction of roads was as much connected with development and the progress of civilization, and excited as much interest as that of railroads since.

Up to this time, communication between New York and Philadelphia was had by conveyances from Trenton to Blazing Star or Amboy or Elizabeth Point passing through by Bonhamtown. It was considered something of an advance when, in 1765, "covered Jersey wagons," without springs, running twice a week, enable travelers to make the time in three days; and a line afterward "of good stage wagons, and the seats on springs," which in summer got the passengers through in two days, was known as the "Flying Machine line," and up to the year 1800 there was little improvement upon that. Drivers cracked their whips and ran their races along the lower sand road with as much enthusiasm as if striving for steamboat or railroad speed, and by the journey's end the horses were enough jaded, and the passengers enough jolted, and the reinsman enough "treated," to make rest convenient for the whole party.

The charter for the "Essex and Middlesex" Turnpike, from Newark to New Brunswick, was procured March, 1806, and that for the "Amboy and Boundbrook" Turnpike, which passes under the railroad bridge and on through New Durham, was procured June, 1808. Both were probably finished by 1810. This, of course, made lively times in the little village, which thus became a place on two two regular lines of travel.

The stage-coach passing through the town realized to it a connection with the adjacent cities, and occasioned the usual amount of awakened interest. If you have ever traveled in a section which had no other mode of communication with the outside world, you can easily picture to yourselves the curiosity thus excited. Either from the driver, or from the passengers, or from an occasional newspaper left with the landlord, the latest accident, or the most important and recent public occurrence was duly heralded.

Great rivalry existed between various lines, and Rev. Dr. Beattie, of Steubenville, but formerly of New Jersey, has told me that he well remembered riding through here when two finger-boards at the intersection of the two turnpikes, pointing in different directions, each assured the passer-by that it designated the nearest route to New York.

Public houses sprung up in abundance, to accommodate travelers and the group that gathered at evening to hear local and general news.

At one time or other in this period a public house was kept by Mr. Harriot in a small building, where R. R. Freeman now lives, and until about 1826; another on the corner now owned by Mr. Swan; another by John Hampton, Sr., in the Board house, and still another

opposite. The house of Mr. Board had just been built at the foot of the hill, and from the inability of its owner to finish it, obtained the name of Ross' Folly. The public house of Mr. Campbell, opposite, had been moved from a field near by, and refitted soon after the turnpike opened. A store was also kept in the small house opposite, and another where Alexander Ayres now lives. Col. Robert Ross resided where the Vail House now stands until the time of his death, in 1827. A school-house had been moved soon after the Turnpike was opened to the locality of the present one. Rev. Mr. Cook was still pastor of the church, and so remained until his death, in 1824.

Dr. Manning, a son-in-law of Dr. Melancthon Freeman, and Dr. Cool practised here for a time; but in the later portion of this period Dr. Wm. Martin, who lived at the corner known as Pumptown, and also kept store, was the chief practitioner. In 1814 and 1815 the name of Dr. Van Meulen also appears.

Ezra Mundy and two or three others of the same surname who had gone from this place to New York, and been successful enough as merchants to buy farms, soon after 1800 returned and located here, and also Simeon Mundy, from New Brunswick, about 1823.

Bethune Duncan, the brother of Chief Justice Duncan of South Carolina, and so well remembered by many of us, commenced teaching school at Oak Tree October, 1819, and continued his service there for forty-five years. He was born in Boston June 6th, 1786, and is therefore now in his eighty-fourth year. As a clerk in counting-houses in Philadelphia, New York, Savannah and Charleston, he had added to a good English education excellent business training. The house he served sent him to India, and after mercantile employment there for a year, he returned to find his father dead, his employer broken, and himself without funds. "But," says he, in a letter to me, "I did not despair. The world was all before me. I had all my limbs in good order, and left Jersey City in good heart, with two shillings and three pence in my pocket." Seeking employment of some kind, he came to the house of Major Frazee Ayres, who directed him to Mr. Henry Campbell, with whom he staid until Mr. Ayres secured him an appointment as teacher. He had found his place, for he loved books and children, was competent in all he undertook to teach, and many a man and woman of this vicinity received from him thorough knowledge and impress of character, which has done much to make them valued and efficient citizens. Elegant in penmanship, exact in reading, spelling, arithmetic and bookkeeping; a good disciplinarian, and devoted to his work, he could not but succeed. All the money he could spare he spent in flowers and in books, giving presents, circulating his library, and delighting to ornament the gardens of his patrons with slips and bulbs from his choicest selections. He was

ever welcome at the homes of his pupils; at every wedding was always a favorite guest, and in single blessedness enjoyed his life among us until increasing years made rest and recreation desirable. To his pleasant home in the family of his sister, Mrs. Dr. Adams, of Waltham, Mass., he is followed by the grateful good wishes of hundreds of scholars and friends.

During the first quarter of the nineteenth century occurred our second war with Great Britain, which, by the high prices prevailing for many articles raised by our farmers, was, in a pecuniary point of view, an advantage to our community. I remember well hearing John Hampton, Sr., who was then a leading and successful farmer, tell how he made money very fast by selling wood at fourteen dollars a cord; and other things were somewhat in proportion.

Although this great epoch, both in European and American history, did not reflect any very wonderful events into Metuchen, yet a gradual increase of population and thrift, and the changes already noted, were foundations for progress, which the lapse of time has made more apparent. Material prosperity was increasing, religious interests were advancing, and intelligence was at least so valued that, as I judge from a subscription list I have seen, a circulating library had been secured.

The patriotism which had been evolved by the memories of '76, and replenished by the events of 1812–14, continued to be cherished. The Fourth of July was an occasion of more significance than now, as often the comrades in patriotic service met together, and with marches, and reading of "The Declaration," and a good dinner for all, they renewed and reconsecrated the precious memories of the hard-fought and well-won triumphs of liberty.

Besides this, the yearly Training-day, which had been appointed for the purpose of preserving a military spirit, and for practice in tactics and fire-arms, was still an institution, and served to awaken the latent enthusiam of all the commonwealth. Continental and militia captains imagined themselves once more on duty, and tried to adjust the home-guards and untrained militia in something of military order. Old suits and new, swords, bayonets and fowling-pieces, cavalry horses and spurs, stars and stripes, were quite in demand, and as the citizen soldiery trained along to the music of fife and drum, the whole township was roused to patriotic zeal, and the people generally held grand holiday.

But alas! time seemed to develop the fact that many fell out of line; that defenders of our country were not to be made by such methods, and some accustomed to sobriety would on this special occasion lose their hats and return to the bosom of their families somewhat tipsical. The result was that "general training" incurred the disapprobation of some of the more sturdy yeomanry, and as it was fondly hoped that war would never come again, a few years

later all the brave legions were excused from this fatigue duty and allowed in retiracy to rest upon the laurels they had won.

So much as to the Forefathers. As to the Fore-mothers, they were mostly models of industry and comeliness. They laid their hands to the spindle, and to weave and knit and make a sampler, were accounted necessary accomplishments.

They no doubt followed the fashions then as now, protecting their head and ears from the inclemency of the weather and the rays of the sun by bonnets, any one of which would now furnish material for a dozen cockle-shells. They had little occasion for veils or parasols, and dared to appear in the same silk dress at least sixteen times in a year. As to what the young ladies were, I see some here present, older than then, but jolly yet. How they managed and how they won; they can spin that yarn better than I. Among the daughters may there be many such like.

The next quarter of a century, from 1825 to 1850, I must notice by reference to somewhat shorter intervals.

Between 1825 and 1835 Ezra Ayres, (1825)* Steele Manning, (1828) W. M. Ross, (1832) and Frazee Ayres, who had gone from here when young and been successful as merchants in New York, lured by a love for their former homes, returned and settled in this locality. Rev. Holloway W. Hunt became pastor of the Presbyterian church (1828) after the brief pastorate of Rev. Michael Osborn, and Lewis and David G. Thomas (1831) of Woodbury, Conn., settled here. All these persons became prominently identified with the place, and by their influence or individual enterprise did much to give moral and material basis for future advance.

In 1828 M. Freeman, the father of R. R. Freeman, moved here from New Brunswick. Lewis Campbell and Lewis Thomas, Lenox and Tucker (1834) were actively engaged in merchandise or more general trading; Samuel Voorhees superintended a thriving carriage and blacksmith business where Mr. Marshall now lives, and the village seemed gradually becoming a more important centre. A Post-office was first established at Metuchen March 29th, 1832, and was kept in Upper Metuchen by Lewis Thomas until February 2, 1839, when George B Stelle was appointed.

About 1832 a mystery occurred which has never yet been unraveled. A Mr. Randolph, then resident at Rahway, was within a few weeks to be married to an estimable lady of this neighborhood, and on his return from her house one Sunday evening about eleven o'clock, the discharge of a rifle was heard in the direction of the store now kept by Mr. Lewis Thomas. It did not cause any very particular inquiry until two days after, when it was reported that Mr. Randolph was missing from his store and had not been heard of since that

* These dates are taken from first pew rentals.

night. Search was made in the thicket which then covered the spot, and his saddle was found besmeared with blood.

The whole community was soon aroused, and a day appointed, by notices from the pulpits of the county, for the people to assemble and make search for the body. A lady who lived on an obscure road told me that her little girl counted one hundred and fifty-eight persons who crossed the fields just from that direction on their way to the spot, and from every course groups gathered, divided in opinion as to the affair, and determined, if possible, to get a clue to facts.

That day his pocket-book was found, containing his papers but no money. It was said that he had received $2000 the night before. A letter was found saying that the body was in "Mine Gully," about three miles distant; but search being made there, another letter stated that it was in a distant creek. His relatives mourned his death, and a funeral sermon was preached.

Reports that he had been seen were freely circulated, and believed by some, but others regarded them as the devices of robbers, who had followed him from his home and thus waylaid him. Whether it was a lover's freak or an actual murder has never been revealed. Neither horse or rider, living or dead, have ever been found, and the air of mystery has not been cleared by the lapse of years. Romance and Tragedy still dispute their claims to the occurrence, and some coming writer of "fiction founded on fact" may here weave a story wonderful as the Legends of Sleepy Hollow, and marvellous as the exploits of a headless horseman.

When I was a boy, a traveling merchant, distressed by his losses, had but lately been found suspended to a tree in the opposite woods, and some who looked as if they ought to be suspended frequently passed along that lonesome road. I often had occasion to walk that route alone, and many a time did I march through with the tread of courage and the heart-throb of fear. Now the thickets have been domesticated, and woods and lawns and attractive homes give cheerful diversity to the landscape.

The period from 1835 to 1840 was more eventful in our history than any of the years which preceded.

In 1835 the antiquated Presbyterian church which stood in the old grave-yard lot was replaced by the present one, (40x60,) without its additions but with a small cupola, and the first pews rented February 6th, 1836, were all taken. More detailed facts as to churches and those identified with them will be added in another connection.

The New Jersey Railroad from Jersey City to New Brunswick was finished to New Brunswick bridge in 1836,* and at once gave

* The Viaduct at New Brunswick was not crossed until October 28th, 1837, but the track was extended in 1834 to Newark, in 1835 to Elizabeth, and in 1836 to East Brunswick.

new incitement to all this section. Many of our farmers were busily engaged with their teams in preparing the grades, and Mr. Lewis Campbell was a prominent contractor. The first depot was that still known as Campbell's Station, and our people rejoiced to find themselves four or five times nearer to New York than ever before—reckoning by time-tables.

I well remember the first locomotive and train that passed over the road. The event having been duly pre-noted, at about ten o'clock, A.M., the village school, with its teacher, adjourned to the church grounds, and, there having been some detention, we awaited with others for an hour or more, the expected arrival. And then, for the first time in our lives, we saw the locomotive and the passenger-cars. Curiosity was on tip-toe—all were interested; some excited, some alarmed, and I have quite a vivid recollection of one stout young miss who screamed and ran quite a distance in her fright.

Soon one or two regular trains, and a short freight train, commenced daily trips, and the facility of access was found quite preferable to the stage-coach and post-road.

These were years, as some of you will remember, of financial uncertainty and of much speculation in country and city. Metuchen, like many other small towns, was laid out in building lots, and nothing but the absence of sufficient purchasers prevented sales. I have seen a full map of Upper Metuchen about Campbell's Station, with its streets and building plots as located at that time. But although business was generally depressed by unrealized anticipations, and by the financial crisis through which the country was passing, these were not sleepy days in Metuchen.

The Campbells, the Thomases, the Mundys, the Freemans, the Rosses, Van Sicklens, D. S. Voorhees and others, in their activity and clear-sightedness, would favorably compare with the most of those who have succeeded them or are still their contemporaries.

Besides the store in Upper Metuchen, L. Thomas opened one in the house now occupied by J. J. Clarkson. Farmers labored hard, and brought remunerative produce more in this direction. Board varied from one to two dollars a week; the expense of getting married averaged from two to five dollars; men and women were shrewd for bargain or trade, and if real estate was less buoyant than now, personal property, cattle, wares and merchandise of all descriptions frequently changed hands, and increased thrift was apparent. Monsieur Beaumont built the large Tilby House, and waked up the natives by his lavish expenditures. The Debating Society flourished in the Franklin school-house; singing schools were popular; Horace Greeley discoursed on politics to an interested audience, and when the "log cabin and hard cider" campaign fully set in, a great big meeting in Upper Metuchen called together

the whole country round, and enthusiasm was unbounded. The great "Salt Water Day," as the Harvest Joy Day and the great washing time, came off in August then as well as now, and no inhabitant is so old as to remember the origin of the custom. Metuchen was the chief town on the route, and its people joined with the dusty crowds that hastened to the bay. It was oft a time of good cheer and pleasant meeting in pic-nic style, and as a live relic of the olden time, is not likely soon to disappear.

The Wood Bee, or Minister's Frolic, as it was then called, came off yearly about October, when with oxen and horses the good people made general turn-out to fill up the pastor's wood-pile. And truly a frolic it was. There was brushing about and log-rolling in abundance, and when the work was done, over chicken pot-pie and good coffee, and divers other good things, all endeavored to give practical evidence that active labor was promotive of good appetite.

The old school-house still continued to be the spot where young ideas began to shoot, and manifold teachers, mostly from New England, sought to guide and model the rising race. The names of Miss Abigail Thomas, Mr. Lane, Mr. Tibbitts, Mr. Fuller, now a leading citizen of Peekskill, and many others, are still familiarly recalled by our earlier citizens.

In the year 1839 Mr. Alpheus W. Kellogg was recommended to us by Mr. Hastings, of New York city, as an educated gentleman and a good chorister, and for many years took charge of the school, and of the music of the Presbyterian church from thence onward to this date. He has accomplished much for the training and culture of the children of our community, and in fostering musical taste, and I rejoice that I had the honor of graduating from the public school under his tuition. In his voluntary retiracy, we are glad to claim him as a permanent citizen, and to recognize his earnest interest in all that relates to the welfare of our town.

During these years the Rev. Mr. Hunt was still pastor of the church, and had built the house now occupied by E. F. Ayres.

Mr. Smith Bloomfield returned here from New York in 1639, and became a prominent citizen.

Dr. Wm. Martin, who had so long practised here, died in 1839, and Ezra Mundy and Lewis Campbell within a year or two after. The loss of all these was severely felt by this community. Dr. Hall, who had resided here from about 1830, had removed to Newark, N. J., but a little time previous.

Dr. Nelson Stelle settled here in 1835, but removed to New York about 1838. I knew him as a noble-hearted and successful practitioner, and, with numerous friends, mourned his death in 1864. Dr. Crane succeeded him, but only remained a year, and then removed to Orange, where he still resides. Dr. C. H. Schapps then settled here, and after practising for six or seven years, removed to

Perth Amboy, and afterward to Williamsburgh, N. Y., where he is still an active and efficient physician.

I cannot account for these frequent medical removals, except that the peculiar healthiness of the place, while it was sustaining to others, made it quite impracticable for doctors to attempt to survive and make a living. "To live and let live," you know, is reasonable even for a physician.

During most of this period Dr. Jacob Martin resided here. He was a man of good medical education, but devoted himself to practice only to a limited extent. In his old age he has recently removed to live with his son, at Elizabethport.

We are now brought to the period which may be included in a decade reaching from 1840 to 1850. These years afford little so marked as to require particular and extended notice of the chronicler, and yet are easily recognized as characterized by steady and substantial increase in real and material prosperity.

In the whole neighborhood round about there was a gradual improvement of lands, and of buildings upon them; of roads and facilities of access; of the people, as to intelligence, and of the immediate village, by the addition of a few houses and the repair and adornment of those already erected.

A new railroad station was made at the road-crossing by the old grave-yard, in 1841, and two or three houses built between it and J. J. Clarkson's store.

The Post-office was changed from Upper Metuchen, and R. R. Freeman appointed Postmaster, July 23d, 1841. He was succeeded, July 3d, 1845, by Ezekiel Merritt. The appointment since to date has been successively held by J. J. Clarkson, Thomas Van Siclen, Freeman Edgar, Ezekiel Merritt and J. E. Van Geisen.

Captain Nathan Robins, a merchant of New York, but formerly of Monmouth County, N. J., removed here in 1840, and the branches of his family as represented by N. Robins, Hon. A. Robins and Wright Robins, have ever since been prominently identified with us.

New stores were opened at the corner now occupied by J. J. Clarkson, another by Mr. L. Thomas, near where Mr. Gilmur now lives, and one by Ezekiel Merritt, at the station.

The old unpainted school-house was moved away, to give place (1842) to the present one, long used both for a school and a lecture-room.

The Rev. Mr. Hunt preached in the Presbyterian church as before until his resignation in 1847, and in 1848 the Rev. Peter H. Burghart was settled here. The present Parsonage was built at that time.

To the period from 1850 to 1860 the general record made as to the former decade, still more fully applies. General thrift and ac-

tivity became more apparent; more attention was given to real estate and more consideration as to its value and improvement.

That part of the town south and east of the old grave-yard, especially began to improve, and an academy for a parochial school was built (1852) nearly opposite the Reformed Church, but has since been removed (1858) to the present locality.

A demand for stone and gravel on the part of the railroad company gave active employment to many of our farmers and teamsters, and brought considerable money into the place. The company afterward purchased the gravel-pit at Bonhamtown, and built a railroad to it about 1859.

Mr. David S. Thomas either built himself, or induced others to build on portions of his land, and Mr. L. Thomas, who had for a year removed to Newark, returned and (1850) built the house now occupied by Mr. Coleman.

Mr. T. W. Strong, of New York city, soon after purchased the Freeman farm, and about 1854 built his present residence in Woodwild. In the winter of 1852 the Hay Press was built by Augustine Campbell, and in charge of M. Freeman, soon made an active business.

By the death of John Hampton, Sr., the chief land-owner of this section, a large quantity of valuable real estate came into market, and its sale, May 15th, 1855, passed it into the hands of various persons, who have since improved and developed it. Mr. Ellis F. Ayres the next year built the house now occupied by Mr. Nathan Robins, and some twenty houses during these few years so added to the size and neatness of the village, as to give it a more townly and inviting appearance.

In 1850 Rev. Robert S. Finley had been called to the pastorate of the Presbyterian church, and continued his connection about seven years. The First Reformed Dutch church was built in 1858, and in 1859 called the Rev J. Bodine Thompson as its first pastor. The Rev. Gardiner S. Plumley was called to the pastorate of the Presbyterian church January, 1858.

In 1849, Dr. D. Decker commenced practice here, and in 1851 also, Dr. Lytell, now of Princeton, who remained here but little more than a year. Dr. E. M. Hunt commenced practice April, 1852, and was at first associated with Dr. Decker, who ceased practice in 1854. He, however, resided in this vicinity until 1867, and for a short portion of the time assisted Dr. Hunt, and supplied his place during his absence in the army. Dr. Joseph S. Martin commenced practice here about 1857; but in 1862, having received an appointment as surgeon to a New Jersey regiment, he served for three years, and soon after settled in Elizabethport, N. J. Dr. W. Knight came November, 1862.

The public school continued, as before, under the charge of Mr.

Kellogg, and about 1860 Prof. Wm. Hopkins opened a prosperous select school in the academy.

The beginning of the present decade, from 1860 to 1870, found us a prosperous and growing community. The spirit of improvement was more general, and although, by reason of depression connected with the beginning of the war, there was little extension of building or business, yet some property changed ownership, and lands and streets and buildings were improved. Mr. D. G. Thomas opened the street on which he now resides, and other avenues were projected.

A few of our number joined the great army of the Republic and did what they could to secure victory and peace. A company was raised from this township, and many others joined different regiments, while those that remained at home for the most part took earnest interest in sustaining the Government.

The stones of the Cemetery bear evidence as to some of our losses, while the well-known record as to most that survive, shows that they zealously and faithfully performed their duty.

The great union meeting at the beginning of the war; the rally for promoting enlistments; the big wagon drumming up recruits for Captain Inslee's Company; the drilling of Home-Guards; the anxieties of that beautiful, solemn Sabbath day, when we were all in suspense over the latest news of the night before, that the Confederates had cut off access to Washington; the stunning tidings of the Manassas defeat, when all were expectant of victory—these are among the early home memories of the war. Then for many a month there was the hurrying of crowded soldier-trains; the keen appetite for news, so that even the Sunday postman must supply the mail; the reverses and successes, and at last the dreaded but necessary draft that hastened on the victories. Anon comes the glad return of joyful regiments; the veteran parade of thankful victors, and ere the first flush of joy had passed, that strange tragedy of Presidential death, and that funeral car, with solemn escort, bearing along the remains of the "Great Executive" to his distant home. These are scenes so fresh and vivid, that I need not dwell upon them; but what your ears have heard, and your eyes have seen, is a whole era and epoch of history condensed in a few short years, and many a father will, in the days of his age, recount to his children these sights and sounds of his own times, and cultivate a true national patriotism by the rehearsal.

And now we are brought to the more recent five years of our history. It is especially within these that most of the development of the place has occurred. During this period all but one of the new streets, now numbering fifteen or more, have been opened, and more than half the houses within a mile from the East Station have been built or remodelled. Messrs. T. W. Strong, L. & D. G. Thomas,

E. F. Ayres, E. M. Hunt, C. C. Campbell, M. Daniels, A. W. Marshall and C. O. Poole have opened avenues or streets, and most of them, as well as G. Greason, Homer Jones and N. Robins, built more houses or stores than they needed for their own accommodation. Mr. Greason's new block of stores, the sign-boards of streets, and some private lamp-posts, are hints as to a future city.

The Public School is well conducted by J. Newton Smith, although a new building is much needed; and Mr. L. P. Cowles has opened a select school under encouraging auspices. A reading-room and library (1870) have just been opened to the public, and the Order of the Sons of Temperance, organized about two years since, and who initiated this movement, are doing what they can to promote mental culture and good morals.

In the past we owe much to the fact that those who have been able among us, have shown a disposition to improve their properties and to develop the town. New families have been welcomed, and in many instances have readily co-operated in plans for future progress.

Within a year a new Methodist and a new Episcopal church have been occupied, and Roman Catholic service is held in a small chapel on ground secured for a church.

A Building Loan Association has recently been organized, and mechanics and laborers are striving to secure homes of their own. The fitness of the location for trade and manufacturers is attracting the attention of capitalists, while the recent clay developments near to us at Bonhamtown have already commanded large investments from experienced dealers.

An Act of Incorporation, passed 1869, was viewed by our people as premature, and although there is much that can be done to advantage in the way of public improvement, we hope the spirit and liberality of our citizens will be found equal to a wise and judicious expenditure, and that they will, with good degree of unanimity, co-operate in such plans as wise policy, no less than public spirit, dictates.

The Railroad Company are this year to build a permanent Central Station, with such improvements and facilities as they believe will greatly appreciate the interests and value of this whole section.

The access to large adjacent cities is so ready, the society so good, and the remarkable healthfulness of the place so well authenticated, that it presents the best inducements for business and for suburban residence, while its natural drainage, its undulating landscape, its fertility of soil, its equibility of climate, midway between river and mountain, all conjoin to render it a popular and attractive home.

Most of those who have settled here find their purchases a pecuniary advantage, while social and moral attractions of a high order give the promise of continued and accelerated growth. While large

additions have been made of new residents, the branches of our older families cling with fondness to their early homes, and after years of absence not a few return to locate here. Among those native born, who, by professional position have helped to reflect honor on their early home, we may name Ezra Mundy, long a teacher in St. Louis; O. Van Derhoven, Esq., editor of the Paterson "Guardian;" C. S. Titsworth, Prosecuting Attorney, Newark; Rev. W. Randolph, of Boston, and Rev. Ezekiel Mundy, of Syracuse, both Baptist ministers; General Ezra A. Carman, and D. B. Hunt, M.D., a recent graduate of Columbia Medical College, N. Y.

Just now, as we enter upon a new decade of our history, the Legislature has assigned us new boundaries. By Act of March, 1870, parts of Woodbridge and Piscataway adjacent to the river, and extending some three miles back therefrom, have been formed into a new township, with the name of Raritan, and Metuchen becomes the natural centre of this rich and important district. The name of Raritan, like Metuchen, is an Indian name, and means "the forked river," in allusion to the two chief streams from which it is formed. The head waters of one of these, now known as Raritan brook, is in our village, and we most properly appropriate this as the name of our new township.

Piscataway and Woodbridge, so allied in early history and settlement, thus have a part of each joined as one, and, as the two fountain-sources of the Raritan commingle into one grand river, so that none can distinguish the drops of the one from the other as they flow pleasantly on in one undivided stream, so it is hoped and believed that our people, with unity of sentiment and of interest, will co-operate together in the promotion of our mutual, moral and material prosperity.

The township thus formed is one of the very best in our State, and as to Metuchen, the locality is appreciated by visitors as well as by those who are residents. Its pleasant diversity of hill and valley, meadow and wood; its central and sightly position, commanding views from points here and there of Plainfield, Westfield, New Brunswick, Amboy, Staten Island, Rahway, Elizabeth, Newark and New York, render its elevation and scenery desirable and inviting. There is only need that by the adornments of art, and in the spirit of public improvement, we take grand advantage of natural adaptations.

We have thus traced the past in order that we may have some adequate appreciation of those who have preceded us, and of the successive steps in our development, and that the future historian may have an authentic source from which to glean an introduction when grander events and more inciting progress demand a more extended notice.

The record, though unpretending, has been substantial and hon-

orable, with names and history unmarred by any blot or blur inimical to fairness and respectability of fame; the present is with us to plan and enjoy, the future is before us to execute and unfold.

Let us see to it, that in every respect a wise and broad policy governs us; that we lay out for the future what the next generation will approve; that we so combine the beautiful and the useful as to season the substantial with the attractiveness of taste, and do nothing so meagre on the one hand, or so extravagant on the other, as to stint or overburden the coming population.

In our care for so-called material interests, let us ever remember that the demands of religion and education are more material than all else, and that he builds for himself and for his posterity on a flimsy foundation who does not see to it that means for moral and mental elevation are provided and sustained with hearty and munificent patronage. While physical energy and business foresight are commendable, these must not be parted from such wisdom as revelation, reason and experience alike attest.

In this, our goodly home and pleasant heritage, let us do our parts in laying concrete foundations, like those of cemented jasper and amethyst, on which those who come after us may build as wise master-builders, feeling that the basis is a good one to work on, and such that even great expansion and lofty workmanship will never at all imperil it. Thus will our memories be cherished, and thus, even better than that, our words, our acts, our deeds, will have abundant fruitage in the happiness and elevation of society.

HISTORY

OF THE

CHURCHES OF METUCHEN.

History of the First Presbyterian Church of Metuchen,

FORMERLY KNOWN AS THE SECOND CHURCH OF WOODBRIDGE.

It is impossible accurately to determine at what time a place for religious worship was first established at Metuchen. We have already seen that its first settlement, about 1670–90, was due chiefly to the colonies which formed at Woodbridge, Piscataway and Perth Amboy, and as all these had a decided Christian character, it is probable that those settling in the neighborhood of what is afterward termed "the upper part of Woodbridge, known as Metuching," early provided themselves with some accommodations for Christian service.

In a paper which I have seen bearing upon the church parsonage case in chancery, there is reference to a union which was formed with the church at Woodbridge August 5th, 1767, showing that then this was not a branch formed at that time from the Woodbridge church, but had before that an independent existence.

A list of a half dozen or more names was at that time also adduced, of original settlers of Woodbridge township who were members of a congregation here, in order to show that the right to the land originally given "for religious purposes," appertained to this portion of the township.

Miss Deborah Ayres is under the impression that the church which was standing during the Revolution was the second building upon the same spot, for she had heard her father say that they had preachers before Parson Roe's time, and when a child, had heard reference made to a barn, which was said to have been the old church before the new one was built.

As the first church of Woodbridge was finished about 1682, although not constituted as a Presbyterian church until 1692, and as the settlement of the three townships of Woodbridge, Piscataway

and Perth Amboy were all of this period, it is quite probable that early in the century commencing with 1700, some place for worship existed on a part of the land the early inhabitants had selected as their grave-yard, and which has been enlarged by at least three purchases since. If so, although no ecclesiastical connection with Presbytery had been instituted, our people had those who preached and labored for their spiritual welfare. The sister of Manning Thornal has told me that her great-grandfather, Nathaniel Manning, when the church had no stated supply, was in the habit sometimes of seeking a preacher in New Brunswick, and spoke especially of the preaching of Gilbert Tenant He was one of the subscribers for Tenant's Sermons, published in 1757, taking a dozen copies, which were distributed among the family, and she has one copy in possession.

Rev. Azel Roe was settled as pastor of first Woodbridge church in 1763, and by the union of 1767 the church here probably took presbyterial organization, he becoming co-pastor of this church, the Woodbridge session serving for both.

The first schedule of accounts is in 1780, when it appears that he ministered to this congregation one half of the time, and received from them £70, or one half of his whole salary. This of itself shows the congregation at that time to have been nearly or quite equal to that of Woodbridge.

The first official record which we have of the church is dated June 2, 1784. Instead of Trustees, collectors were chosen each year, who collected pew-rents, and paid the amounts to Mr. Roe, according to an understanding with the church at Woodbridge, called "the lower congregation." There was also an arrangement of the two congregations in reference to the rent of the "Great Parsonage," situated between the two. Metuching was allowed one third, which was then £20. After 1783 it was one half, but on account of lower rental, amounted to about the same. In addition, they carted and delivered wood from the "Great Parsonage" for Mr. Roe.

The number of seats in the church below-stairs at this time was forty-two, and in the galleries twenty-two. An aisle ran east and west, with rows of seats each side, at the head of which was the high pulpit, with its sounding-board, and a place in front, and a little to the left, for the clerk of the singing, as the Leader was then called. An aisle ran along the front of the pulpit, at the south end of which was the only church door, this being the front of the church. Besides the centre-aisle, running east and west, two narrow side-aisles parallel with it, ran down each side a little distance from the wall, leaving side slips against the wall lengthwise, which were called pews, as distinguished from the other seats. Each gallery on the side extended over one fourth of the width of the

church, and the gallery opposite the pulpit was of the same depth. The number of seats from the pulpit back was seven, and the width four seats and two pews. The size of the church was thus probably about 36x25, until enlarged.

There was no place for stoves, these not being used, and the good people depending for warmth on the foot-stoves they brought with them, until a change was made in 1792.

The meeting-house had a shingle inclosure, was unpainted, had no steeple, and the roof was four-sided, or, as it is now called, "Mansard."

Two meetings were held on Sabbath, with an intermission, and although plainness, by necessity, marked those primitive times, yet freedom of worship, and sincerity of doctrine and of life, made many to love their chosen place of assembly.

The following are the pew-holders and the amount of rental paid, as by the list of June 2, 1784:

RENTAL OF SEATS, JUNE 2d, 1784.

No.	*Names.*	£	*s.*
1	Ebenezer Ford	2	15
2	John Blomfield	1	5
3	James Ayres	1	4
4	Robert Ross	1	3
5	Zachariah Kelley	1	3
6	Martin Mundy	1	2
7	Thomas Goodfellow		19
8	Joseph Freeman	1	5
9	Benj. Kelley	1	5
10	Ephraim Morris	1	5
11	John Morris	1	4
12	William Thixton	1	1
13	Reuben Ayers	1	00
14	Samuel Ayers		17
15	Phinias Manning	1	15
16	Benj. Ford	1	5
17	Dr. Nath'l Martin	1	5
18	Dr. Mel'n Freeman	1	5
19	Wm. Bloomfield	1	4
20	Moses Morris	1	3
21	George Kelley		19
22	Ellis Bloomfield	1	5
23	Benj. Manning	1	5
		28	12
24	Matthew Freeman	1	5
25	David Crow, Esq.	1	5
26	Dugal Campbell	1	4
27	Alexander Cotheal	1	3
28	Zebulon Ayers		19
29	John Noe	1	5
30	John Conger	1	5
31	James Manning	1	5
32	Benajah Martin	1	4
33	Thomas Manning	1	1
34	Joseph Freeman, Jr.	1	00
35	Ellis Ayers		17
36	Daniel Compton		19
37	Daniel Hampton		15
38	Israel Thornal	2	00
39	Clossen Mundy	1	5
40	Timothy Bloomfield	1	5
41	Jeremiah Clarkson	1	3
42	William Manning	1	2
		28	12
	Seats below stairs	50	6
	RENT OF SEATS IN GALLERY.		
	Taylor Brown		10

Chose Mr. Daniel Hampton for Doorkeeper for the current year, at 40*s.* per year.

From action had at a parish meeting held October 29th of the same year, it is evident that the meeting-house had been recently in some way altered and repaired, as reference is made to a committee for "finishing and repairing the meeting-house," and the plan of the building as before referred to is given.

An Act having been passed by the Legislature March 16th, 1786,

in reference to the incorporation of religious societies, this church was regularly incorporated as the Second Presbyterian Church of Woodbridge, October, 1787, and April 5th, 1787, the following, its first Trustees, were chosen:

Benjamin Manning,	Ebenezer Ford,
John Conger,	Ellis Ayers,
John Ross,	Timothy Bloomfield,

Robert Ross.

In 1790 a gracious and extensive revival in this and Woodbridge church added over a hundred to the membership, but how many to each church is not stated.

In 1792 the meeting-house was enlarged by an addition of fifteen feet, and its roof changed and chimneys provided. A subscription of two hundred and seventy-five pounds, nine shillings was made, but by accounts, April, 1795, it appears that 390 pounds, or about $900, was expended. The lowest bids for doing the work were made by Mr. Jonathan Freeman and Mr. Johile Freeman, as follows:

Mr. Jonathan Freeman.—"Himself 6 shillings per day, one hand at 5*s*, one at 4*s*, 6*d*, and an apprentice at 3*s*, 6*d*. And asks no rum or any other spirits, and will through in as much work as any other undertaker."

Mr. Johile Freeman.—"For himself 6 shillings per day, and 3 Journeymen at 5*s*, 6*d*, per day, and will through in 10 days work for one hand, and asks no spirits, if found with small beer."

The contract was given to Jonathan Freeman. The meeting-house, as now enlarged, had an entrance made to the east, which became the main entrance. Five or six more seats were added in depth, and by the new plan fifty-six seats and pews in all were made below stairs. The size now was probably about 36x40.

The congregation applied to the First Church of Woodbridge for leave to cut timber for this addition from the "Great Parsonage." They gave no direct answer, but sent a request, through our Committee, that we should "jointly apply to Presbytery to call an assistant minister, for the benefit and purpose of having divine service every Lord's day." The Trustees of our church replied that, "inasmuch as they were about repairing and enlarging their meeting-house, they could not think it expedient at the present time to join in their request."

The church at Woodbridge, thereupon, made application to Presbytery meeting at Woodbridge, October, 1792, for a separation, but it was opposed by Metuching, and was not granted.

April 6th, 1793, the Woodbridge church appointed a Committee to renew their request, at the same time offering to Metuching one third of the services of Mr. Roe, and one third of the rents of the Great Parsonage for one year, and as might be agreed from year to year afterward, if the separation took place. The Metuching con-

gregation met April 15th, 1793, and declined to join in the request, and, if it should be granted, declined to accept of the offer made by the First Church of Woodbridge.

At this meeting Mr. James Manning was chosen a ruling elder. Before this the session of the church at Woodbridge had served for both congregations, (see Sprague's Annals,) and the election of Mr. Manning seems to have been in view of a possible separation. The congregation also appointed a Committee of five to attend Presbytery, with plenary power to obtain supplies in case of separation.

The Presbytery of New York, meeting at Orange, May 9th, 1793, authorized a separation, but recommended that Metuchen retain the services of Rev. Mr. Roe for one third of the time.

The congregation at Metuchen, May 16th, 1793, declined to accede to this recommendation unless Woodbridge would give and lot off to them one third of the "Great Parsonage," which they declined to do.

So the connection was dissolved, and it was agreed "that the pew rents for that year should be applied to raise money for the deficiencies of salary, and of enlarging the house, and also to raise a fund to go toward purchasing a parsonage."

It was agreed that the supplies to the congregation "be paid out of collections to be made for that purpose, and that young ministers not settled be paid five dollars, and that settled ministers be paid thirty shillings per Sabbath."

The separation seems to have been the natural result of the growth of both congregations, and the unwillingness of our people to accept any thing less than preaching each alternate Sabbath.

I have been told that on the vacant Sabbaths some, both of men and women, went on foot or on horseback to the Woodbridge church, some of the more particular ladies carrying a second pair of neater shoes with them, in order to appear well with their nice short dresses and silk stockings.

But it was too much to ask that they journey thus far two thirds of the time. The period was at hand when the interests of each parish required a settled pastor, who could devote his whole time to a single flock.

Dr. Roe lived until the year 1818, and continued his connection with the First Church of Woodbridge until his death. He is remembered by some of our oldest people, and is represented by them, as by the portrait of him in possession of the Edgar family at Rahway, as a man of commanding presence and pleasing personal address. He often rode hither on horseback, and labored

with great activity and zeal, not only attending his appointed service here, but holding occasional preaching service at private houses.

As illustrative of the usual hospitality of those days, Henry Campbell, Sr., has told me that he well remembered one cold, blustering day in March, when his mother came to the door, and calling to his father, said: "Dugal, Dugal, don't you know that Parson Roe is to preach here to-night, and we havn't got a drop of sperits in the house?" "Well then," said he, "one of the boys will have to go and get some." And sure enough one of them was posted off that afternoon away to Bricktown, and brought back the desired supply. Whether the parson or his parishioners accepted the kind courtesy, history does not inform us.

The following items in respect to Dr. Roe are gathered from the notice of him in Sprague's Annals of the American Pulpit:

"He was born at Setauket, L. I., March 20th, 1738, and installed at Woodbridge in the Fall of 1763. In height he was about five feet eight or nine inches, and of good presence. As a preacher, he was argumentative and able, trusting more to gospel matter than to any special power of delivery.

"As a patriot he became quite prominent during the Revolution. At one time he incited members of his congregation to follow one of our Continental captains in an attack upon some British troops near Blazing Star, and himself participated in the onset. He was afterward, by the instigation of Tories, taken from his home and carried off by the British, and confined in the famous 'Sugar-House' prison in New York. While being conveyed thither, a courteous English officer, who was won by his deportment, offered to carry him over a small ford, and Mr. Roe accepting the 'backing,' said to him: 'Well, sir, you can say after this that you were once priest-ridden.'"

Mr. Roe was Trustee of the College of New Jersey from 1778 to 1807; was in 1789 a member of the First General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, and its Moderator in 1802. He received the degree of D.D. from Yale College in 1800.

His services had always been acceptable here, and as our first settled pastor, he has left to us the precious legacy of a faithful and successful ministerial life.

By the separation from Woodbridge (1793) the church of Metuchen, being entirely thrown upon its own resources, seems at once to have bestirred itself with Christian energy to securing and sustaining stated religious services.

A call was made out April 22, 1794, and presented to the Presbytery of New York, for the services of Rev. Henry Cook, of Morris County, at a salary of £120, and from May 1st, 1794, he became the pastor. He was then a young man, and was a student of Princeton College about 1789.

The following is the list of pew rentals, as made April, 1794:

List of Pew Rentals, as made April, 1794.

No.	Names.	£	s.	d.
1	Ellis & Timothy Bloomfield	2	13	4
2	Ebenezer Foord & MarthaTalmage	4	6	8
3	Joseph Freeman & Gesham Manning	4		
4	James Manning	3	13	4
5	Zach. & George Kelley	3	13	4
6	Isaac Ayres	1	12	
7	John Flatt, one half	1	12	
8	Vacant	1	9	4
9	Sam'l Ayers & Wm. Tappen	1	13	4
10	Wm. Thixton & Lewis ——	1	14	8
11	Benj. Soper & Benj. Ayers	1	18	8
12	Samuel Compton & Randal Stivers	2		
13	Phineas Carman	2		
14	James Ayers & Elik M. Compton,	2		
15	Ezek'l Ayers & Henry Mundy	2	10	
16	Joseph Freeman, Sr.	2	6	8
17	Capt. Freeman	2	10	
18	John Ross & Jacob Compton	2	10	
19	John Bloomfield and Isaac Cotheal	2	10	
20	Thomas Manning	2	10	
21	James Freeman & Sam. Compton, Jr.	2		
22	Benj. Foord	2		
23	Dr. Martin & Nathan Mundy	2		
24	Lewis Mundy	2		
25	Aaron Mundy	1	18	8
26	David Morris & Dan'l Noe	1	17	4
27	Jessey Van Derhoven & Jas. Morris	1	12	
28	Zebul'n Ayers	1	17	4
29	Dugal Campbell	1	18	8
30	Wm. Foord	2		
31	Nicholas Mundy & Gersh'n Martin	2		
32	Jacob Ayers & Jno. Campbell	2		
33	Nathan Bloomfield	2		
34	Jno. Bloodgood and Eph'm Morris	2		
35	Benj. Mundy & Sam. Mundy	2		
36	Henry Freeman & Captain Bloomfield	2		
37	Wm. Bloomfield	2		
38	Jno. Martin	2	10	
39	Phin. Maning	2	13	4
40	Ellis Mundy & Shubet Merrit	1	3	4
41	Daniel Compton & Mrs. Bates	2		
42	Benj. Campbell & Reub'n Hull	2		
43	Daniel Hampton & Isaac Pots	2		
44	Jonathan Rowland	2		
45	Thomas Goodfellow & Rach. Van Derhoven, 1 quarter	2		
46	Israel Thornal	2		
47	Mich'l Martin	1	18	8
48	Moses Morris	1	13	4
49	Ellis Ayers,	1	13	4
50	Joshua Mundy	1	12	
51	Jeremiah Dunn	1	12	
52	Wm. Manning	1	16	
53	Robt. Ross	4		
54	Dr. Freeman	4		
55	Benj. Manning	4	6	8
56	Enos Ayers & Henry Campbell	4		
		127	6	0

In 1795 a small house and lot was bought for £200, as a Parsonage, where Ellis F. Ayres now lives. A Committee was also appointed to ask of the First Church of Woodbridge a share in the "Great Parsonage," as land which had been granted to the township of Woodbridge for the "support and maintenance of ministers of the Gospel." A refusal on the part of the church at Woodbridge gave rise to a long and vexatious law-suit, which was litigated with the utmost persistency by the church here, as, after having laid the whole case before Frederick Frelinghuysen, of Millstone, they believed their claims were just and right. He and Mr. A. Kirkpatrick and Samuel Leake, of Trenton, were employed to manage the case, which was long in Chancery, and was then carried to the Court of Errors, and finally, in 1800, decided in favor of Woodbridge by a vote of eight to five. An attempt was again made to re-open the case in 1815.

When we come to examine the character of the grant made, the allowance of one half of the rents to Metuchen, and the identity of the founders of the congregation with these early settlers, it is not surprising that the claim should have been made, and it is even yet to be doubted whether the decision was an equitable one.

Amidst all this burden of expense, for which £130 8*s.* 6*d.* was at once raised, and £40 in 1798, and still more afterward, the congregation continued to raise the amount of salary, and in 1796 repaired the Parsonage for the occupancy of Mr. Cook, put a picket fence about the garden, and a board fence in place of the post and rail fence about the grave-yard and church lot.

The subscription started November, 1793, for a Parsonage, now amounted to £382.

In 1799 Benjamin Manning, who had long been President of the Board of Trustees, resigned, and was succeeded by Colonel Robert Ross, who remained in office until 1824.

From 1800 onward there was a steady increase of the congregation, and not only were the fifty-six seats below stairs rented, but in 1805 six were also rented in the gallery. The law-suit, however, had so involved the people, that at one time they made arrangements for selling the Parsonage, but wiser counsels prevailed.

In 1805 Mr. Cook's salary was raised to $400, and four choristers appointed.

In 1807 a small lot was added to the Parsonage, and also one third of an acre to the burying-ground, and the executor of Daniel McGrory paid in £150 which he had left to the church. He was a bachelor, generally called Dan McGregory, and sat in the gallery. Both his name and the gift seem to have been quite forgotten, but it was a most generous and timely aid to the church at that period.

April 28th, 1813, Richard Ross and Lewis Thornal were elected ruling elders. I think that before this period Captain M. Freeman, Benajah Mundy and Thomas Manning had been also elected elders, as they were members of session in 1818, and are believed to have acted as such long before that. As we have no sessional records of these times, it is not remarkable that there is no reference to them in the Trustee book. James Manning, who had been chosen in 1793, was still living. Thomas Manning died in 1819, and Benajah Mundy in 1823.

In 1814 Robert Ross, Jr., was appointed chorister, with David Kelly, who is mentioned as having been appointed Clerk for Singing in 1813, and an affirmative vote was taken on "the subject of employing Wm. Lover to assist them in raising the psalms." Mr. Kelly has told me that he then took much interest in music, and he and Mr. Lover, the singing-school teacher, were in harmony.

Captain Wm. Manning, who died in 1814 at the age of seventy-five, left seven hundred dollars "for the support of the Gospel in

this church." He had long been a useful and prominent citizen, and his decease was greatly lamented.

After 1814 we have no entry of Congregational meetings until 1826, but the Trustee account runs on to 1843.

In 1824 Robert Ross resigned, and was succeeded by Simeon Munday as President of the Board, who long and earnestly served the church in this capacity, afterwards also as an elder.

The death of Rev. Mr. Cook in 1824, at the age of fifty-five, and after a pastorate of thirty years, was lamented by all the congregation as a great bereavement. A stone with suitable inscription marks his resting-place in the old grave-yard. As a faithful pastor, an acceptable preacher, and a noble man in all his relations in life, he is ever spoken of with praise by those who remember him and by those who from their ancestors have learned to respect his memory.

As we have not his sessional book, we only know of the fruits and success of his labors by those who were gathered into the the church during his ministry.

A lady now living has told me that the first time she was ever in a church was the day of his installation. She was so much interested as a little girl, that she was allowed to go the next Sabbath, when he preached from the text, (1 Cor., 2 : 2,) "I determined not to know any thing among you save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified." His life was the application of his text.

One who well remembers his first appearance in Metuchen, describes him as a spare built, medium sized young man, dressing in the shoes, stockings, and breeches of a continental costume, and not at all remarkable for comeliness of features.

By his clear, earnest preaching, his great solemnity of manner, and his kind-hearted faithfulness as a pastor, he soon commended himself to the people, and always secured, to the end of his life, their affectionate regard.

He was married twice, and left four daughters, none of whom now survive.

It was customary in those days for a minister, the Sabbath after a funeral, to wear the scarf into the pulpit, and Mr. Cook once appeared with three scarfs on.

He at times—especially in later years—was subject to depression of spirits, and the story is told, that in one of these periods, being out of health, he went to spend three or four days with a parishioner in Piscataway. He lived adjacent to two neighbors who had married sisters not very remarkable for amiability, and one morning before sunrise, as he was walking to and fro in a field, the husband of one of these seeing him thus walking, without any apparent object, concluded to go and see who it might be. Coming near enough for recognition, he said: "Why, Mr. Cook, is this you? Why, what could have sent you here at this time in the morning?"

"Well, sir," said he, "I have not been very well, and came up here a few days to recruit a little." "Ah! Parson Cook," said he, "it's a desperate poor place for any man to recruit so near to my brother's wife or mine."

Dr. John McDowell, of Philadelphia, and formerly of Elizabeth, in a note under date December 24th, 1860, in reply to a letter of inquiry from Rev. Ezra F. Mundy, thus speaks of him:

PHILADELPHIA, Dec. 24, 1860.

REVEREND SIR: I long knew Rev. Henry Cook, who was for many years settled in the congregation of Metuchen, New Jersey. He was, I think, originally of Mendham, Morris County. He was a very retiring, modest, and even diffident man. He was at times subject to much depression of spirits. He was a good pastor and a good preacher, much respected by his people. He was also a good scholar. In the early part of my ministry—say more than fifty years ago—candidates for the ministry were not examined on the Hebrew language; the Presbytery of New York, which then embraced the city of New York and the Eastern part of New Jersey, as far as the Raritan River, resolved in future to examine on the Hebrew language; Mr. Cook was the only member of Presbytery who could conduct such an examination. Mr. Cook was what you have very appropriately styled him in your letter, "a good man." I regret I cannot give you more details respecting him.

With fraternal respect, yours,

JOHN MCDOWELL.

He preached without notes, and Miss Deborah Ayres says that the worst thing she knew of him was, that "he would sit up late at night and not take much exercise. She speaks particularly of one Saturday when he walked to and fro in his garden, not having suited himself with a text for the Sabbath. He came over to her father's and asked her older sister if she could not find him a text. She said she would at once look him up a verse and bring it over. She selected Isa. 54 : 8, "In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment, but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer." She found him on his couch in tears, but the next day he preached two sermons from that text, which were accounted as especially precious.

In those days it was usual for Presbyteries to have longer meetings, and special visitations of the churches, thus aiding the pastor in protracted meetings. Dr. Griffith, Dr. Richards, and Dr. McDowell were among those who thus preached for us, and made lasting impression.

A revival in 1818 brought many into the church. Rev. Joel Campbell thus speaks of it: "I united with the Metuchen church, under the ministry of Rev. Henry Cook at that time. Ninety were received on that Sabbath, and twenty-seven at the next communion. Wm. M. Ross was one of the converts, I think, and united with Dr. Romeyn's church, N. Y. Several went to the Baptist Church, and some to the Seventh-Day Baptists. That revival was a great revival in many respects. Some aged people were brought in—one over a hundred years of age. The people would walk two, three, and even

four miles to attend a prayer-meeting. In those times the Sabbath-school was held in the old school-house, but we had few helps such as they now have. I have watched the results of the labors and self-denials of that Sabbath-school, and almost, and I think all have been brought to Christ and become useful." I find by the records of Piscataway Church that forty-nine joined as members about that time.

The person above alluded to as over one hundred years of age at the time of his conversion lived between here and Piscataway, and was buried in the grave-yard near the Piscataway Baptist Church. An aged person who was at his funeral has described him to me; and the following epitaph is still to be seen in that burial-ground:

SACRED TO THE MEMORY

OF

ABRAHAM VAN GUILDER,

WHO WAS BORN ON THE HIGH SEAS OCTOBER, 1701,

DEPARTED THIS LIFE FEBRUARY THE 28TH, 1818,

Aged 116 *years* 4 *months*.

Rebel against Heaven this man had been;
Full years one hundred and sixteen;
By Christ's free grace he then became
An heir of God—a new-born son.

This great revival evidently infused new energy into the church. An Education Society for "educating pious youth to supply the waste places of our country," was soon after formed, and in 1823 as auxiliary to the "Society for Ameliorating the Condition of the Jews."

Mr. Cook was able to continue his labors until a short period before his death. His whole estate, as inventoried, amounted to nine hundred and forty-five dollars, and other circumstances show that his heart was not at all concerned about earthly treasures. But he labored faithfully in the vineyard here assigned him, and gathered fruit unto eternal life. While so few remain to remind us of him, it is a pleasure thus to gather fragments of his history, that his memory may never fail to be fondly cherished by the church of his life-long love.

Just at this period, in 1824, we have a resumption of the records of Parish meeting, as registered by Simeon Mundy, May 24, 1824. Ezekiel Ayers was appointed Trustee in place of Robert R. Ross, resigned, and W. W. Ford in place of Richard Ross, resigned. Abram Long was re-appointed Sexton. Matthias Campbell, Frazee

Mundy, David Kelly and Lewis Campbell were selected to lead as singers. Richard Ross was appointed Door-keeper, for which he was to receive ten dollars per annum. Matthias Campbell is to be paid one shilling for each day that he attends and sings.

The following is the

LIST OF PEW RENTALS, AS MADE MAY, 1824:

No.	*Names.*	
1		$0 00
2	Anna Mundy and Widow Soper, ¼	4 50
3	Enoch Kelly, 2 sittings, 16*s.*, Ab'm Long ¼, 10*s.*	5 00
4	John Laforge	5 00
5	Enos Talmage	6 00
6	W.W. Ford ½, Widow Compton ½	6 00
7	Benejah Campbell	6 50
8	Michael Mundy ½, Melancthon Mundy ½	7 00
9	James Randolph ½, Bloomfield Randolph ½	7 00
10	Widow Ayers ½, Jas. Mundy ½	7 00
11	John Campbell	7 00
12	John Morris, Jr.	7 00
13	Zacheus Kelly	7 00
14	Phineas Mundy	7 00
15	Sam'l Bloodgood	8 50
16	Dr. Martin ½, Abner Mundy ½	7 00
17	Amos Noe ½, James Ross	8 50
18	Joseph Clarkson	7 00
19	Benjamin Thornal	8 50
20	Widow Mundy ½, and Enos Mundy ½	7 50
21	Abner Freeman ½, and Ezekiel Mundy ½	8 50
22	John Martin	8 50
23	Frazee Ayers	7 50
24	Widow Van Tuyl ⅛, & Philip Morris ⅞	10 00
25	Benjamin Crow ½, Sam. Ford ½	8 50
26	Rev. H. Cook	
27	Neil Campbell $3, & Widow M. Ayers	8 00
28	Simeon Mundy ½, Henry Campbell ¼, Widow Maning ¼	19 00
29	Ezra Mundy ½, Jer. Campbell ⅛, R. Clarkson 1-6, Rachel Bloomfield 1-6	18 50
30	Daniel Kelly ¼, Eph. Compton 1-6, Simeon Martin 1 sitting	17 00
31	Jacob Ayers ½, Lewis Ross ⅛	18 50
32	Col. Robt. Ross	18 50
33	Ellis Daniels ¼, Widow N. Bloomfield 10*s.*, Henry Noe ¼, 14*s.*	17 50
34		
35	Rich. Ross ¼, W. B. Maning ¼	14 62
36	Manning Thornal 1-3, Jonah & Henry Rowland 2-3	8 00
37	Hannah Martin	4 00
38	Gershom Martin	5 00
39		
40		
41	David Long ½	4 00
42	Ellis Ayers ½, & Frazee Mundy ½	5 50
43	William Toppen ½	5 00
44	Aaron Mundy ½	5 00
45	John Smock	5 00
46	Michael Martin	6 50
47	David Morris ½, John Turner ½	6 00
48	Widow Thornal	6 50
49	Azariah Martin ½	6 00
50	Sam'l Morris ½ John B. Wood ½	6 50
51	William Cool	6 00
52	Jonathan Rowland	6 50
53	Ephraim Thornal ½, Widow Aikin 1 sitting, 11*s.*	5 50
54	John Hampton	6 50
55	Sam'l Compton, Jr.	6 50
56	Ephraim Compton, Sr., ½, A. F. Randolph ½	6 50
57	Widow Van Derhoven ½ and Widow Elikim Martin ½	4 50

At the time of Mr. Cook's death the membership numbered about two hundred.

Capt. M. Freeman, one of the elders of the church, died about this period, and, beside the record of a most devoted Christian life, left a legacy of one hundred dollars to the church.

The Sunday collection in these times was taken in a silk bag or pouch, fastened to the end of a long handle and thus passed from pew to pew. It was generally a genuine penny collection, and the story is told that one good man who was quite annoyed by the

open silk purse, thrust each Sabbath the length of his pew, one day filled his pockets with coppers, and when the collector came along began to empty one pocket after another, until the bag broke and its contents scattered all around. "There now, said he, let that do for the year." The collector having, with some confusion, gathered up the pieces, plates were afterwards substituted, and the payment accepted as a discharge.

As we now deal in paper currency, and the plates will not break, no one need fear to put on of his abundance, and bestow that willing gift which is a part of acceptable worship as really as prayer or praise.

At the time of Mr. Cook's death the membership numbered about two hundred. Capt. M. Freeman, one of the elders of the church, died about this period, and beside the record of a most devoted Christian life, left a legacy of one hundred dollars to the church.

At a meeting of the congregation, held December 12th, 1824, Rev. Michael Osborn was unanimously elected as Pastor, at a salary of four hundred dollars, with use of parsonage house and lot. February 23d, 1825, he was ordained and installed as pastor, and so remained until June 26th, 1827, when the connection was dissolved at his own request.

The acting elders at the time of his call were Richard Ross, John Campbell, Simeon Mundy and Robert Ross. December, 1825, the following additional elders were elected: Samuel Bloodgood, Amos Noe, Melancthon Mundy, Enos Talmage. They were inducted into office February 26th, 1826. Mr. John Campbell died September 10th, 1826.

Rev. Mr. Osborn was a man of spare frame and medium size—of great activity, prompt and decisive; as a preacher clear, and faithful and punctual in all his duties as a Pastor.

Some twelve years since he visited us and preached in our church. Although he possessed but little of the style of modern oratory, he made impression upon me as one worthy of the church to which he had ministered, and as a faithful and able ambassador for Christ.

After leaving here he was pastor of the Dutch Reformed Church in Schraalenberg, Bergen County, N. J., for four and a half years; but most of his subsequent life was spent at the South.

The following is from a notice of him in *Wilson's Historical Almanac*, (1866,) and from letters of his children to me:

"Michael Osborn, son of Abner and Rebecca Bonnel Osborn, was born in Essex County March 21st, 1796. He did not enter College, but received a fair academical training, and studied Theology in the Princeton Seminary, N. J. (1817–20.) He was licensed by New York Presbytery October 10th, 1822, and ordained by Elizabethtown Presbytery in 1825. He labored successively in Savannah, Ga., Metuchen, N. J., Charlotte Court-House, Va., Newbern and Raleigh, N. C., Briery, Cub Creek and Farmville, Va. He died of Consumption at his residence in Farmville, July 3d, 1863. He was married a few months before his settlement here, and was the father of seventeen children, ten of whom are yet living."

Rev. Richard McIlvaine of Farmville writes of him:

"He was no ordinary man. His judgment was sound and logical, his perception quick and accurate, and his memory retentive. His information was both minute and extensive. He was a first-rate classical scholar, and had an exact idea and thorough command of the English language. In the Bible and Theology he was a master. In the earlier part of his life his preaching was of the highest order of excellence, being characterized by a depth of feeling, a pathos, a fire which, in later years, had somewhat abated. He was eminently a man of prayer, and spent much time in secret devotion. Parental duties were discharged with great assiduity and faith. He was a man of unflinching moral integrity; of courage seldom equalled; of uncompromising honesty, and of a firm and persistent adherence to duty. His whole life was spent for God, and his end was peace. Said he in death: 'I am at peace—all is peace; the peace of God which passeth all understanding ruleth in my heart and mind.' When much tortured by pain, he said: 'My testimony is, that God is good; He is good, yes, very good. I have learned one lesson from this sickness, and that is, to distinguish between suffering and happiness; I never suffered more, and never was so happy in my life.'"

Our next pastor, the Rev. Holloway Whitfield Hunt, a descendant of Augustine Hunt, of Hunt's Point, Westchester County, N. Y., was born at Kingwood, Hunterdon County, N. J., March 31st, 1800. He was the son of Rev. Gardiner A. and Ruth Page Hunt, afterward of Harmony, N. J. Mr. Hunt was prepared for college and brought into the Church under the teaching and ministry of Rev. Dr. Finley, of Baskinridge. He graduated at the College of New Jersey, 1818, at Princeton Seminary, 1822, and was licensed by the Presbytery of Newton and April 23d, 1824, transferred to the Presbytery of Albany, to become pastor of the Presbyterian church at West Galway. After a pastorate of eighteen months he resigned, on account of ill-health, and spent the next year in South Carolina, laboring as much as he was able in the service of the Missionary Society of Charleston.

Returning the next year, he first preached in Metuchen, October, 1827, and after being a Stated Supply for six months, received a unanimous call, at a salary of four hundred dollars, with parsonage, and was installed April 29th, 1828. He was married December, 1829, to Miss Henrietta Mundy, of this place. His ministry here as Pastor and Stated Supply extended over a period of eighteen years.

He removed soon after to Newark, and organized the Church at Lyon's Farms, but in about one year was invited to the Congregational Church at Patchogue, L. I., whither he removed in 1850. After laboring there for about ten years, during which a new church was built and the congregation much enlarged, he resigned, with the idea of retiring from active ministerial work.

But with the maintenance of unexpected health and activity, he soon began to feel it his duty to continue stated and ministerial labor, and so removed to Centreville, Orange County, N. Y., where he still ministers to the First Presbyterian Church.

It is not for this pen to speak at length of his Biblical learning, his faithful preaching, and his long and efficient ministry, so blessed

in this church and elsewhere. He severed his connection here contrary to the wishes of a large majority of his charge, and in his occasional visits is welcomed by all his former parishioners.

Besides additions of membership at other seasons, two periods were especially marked by more extensive revivals. In 1831 about forty persons were added on profession of faith, and in 1843 fifty-five.

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The plan of building a new church was first proposed in 1834, and was so forwarded by Stelle Manning, Wm. M. Ross, and others, that it was accomplished, and the new edifice (40x60) was dedicated January 30th, 1836. The next season about twenty were added to the membership, and the congregation continued to enlarge and prosper.

The members of the church session when Mr. Hunt settled here, in 1828, were the same as before mentioned, and July 14th, 1839, Stetle Manning, Daniel S. Voorhees, John Henry Campbell and Wm. M. Ross were added. After Mr. Hunt's resignation Simeon Mundy, Richard Ross, Melancthon Mundy and John H. Campbell, and a little after, Wm. M. Ross and Daniel S. Voorhees withdrew from the duties of acting elders.

After a vacancy of a few months, the Rev. Peter H. Burghardt was called to the pastorate—October 4th, 1847—was installed November 30th, and continued his connection until June 5th, 1850.

Mr. Bughardt was born in West Stockbridge, Berkshire County, Mass., graduated at Union College 1840, at the Theological Seminary, Auburn, in 1843, and was first settled for four years in Northville, Michigan. This was his next settlement. He then supplied the church at Greenport, L. I.; was afterward settled over the Reformed Church at West Farms, N. Y., for four years, and that at Glenville, N. Y., for six years, where about one hundred united with the church.

His Christian patriotism induced him, August, 1861, to accept the position of Chaplain to Col. John Cochrane's regiment of United States Chasseurs. He was with his regiment in nearly every battle that was fought by the "Army of the Potomac," and did most efficient service, both as a chaplain and aid.

His only son, Charlie, whom many of us remember as a bright and promising boy, lost his life in battle the evening before the fall of Richmond, aged about twenty.

Mr. Burghardt after his return labored a few months at Somers, N. Y., and is now settled at Painted Post, N. Y. He is a man of great activity and zeal, both in the pulpit and out of it; labors heartily in whatever he undertakes, and his brief ministry among us was not without its fruit.

December 26th, 1848, Benajah Mundy, John H. Campbell and David Bloomfield were added to the acting eldership.

Our next pastor was the Rev. Robert J. Finley, who was called October 7th, 1850, and installed November 14th, 1850.

He was the son of the Rev. Dr. Finley of Baskinridge, graduated at Princeton College in 1821, and commenced the study of law under Theodore Frelinghuysen. Soon after completing his legal course, he entered upon the practice of law in Cincinnati, but soon abandoned it for the ministry. He labored several years in Louisiana and St. Louis and its vicinity, and afterward traveled extensively throughout the South as the able and efficient agent of the American Colonization Society. From that service he was called to his charge in Metuchen, and continued as pastor until October, 1857, a period of seven years. During his ministry, the church edifice was enlarged from its former (40x60) to its present dimensions, and the pews were let August, 1856. A Parochial Academy was built in 1852, on the land now nearly opposite the Reformed Church, but was afterward moved to its present location. A parish school was organized in it in 1853.

May 28th, 1853, Smith Bloomfield and Albert Edgar were added to the Eldership, and J. J. Clarkson, John Watson and D. G. Thomas were appointed Deacons.

Mr. Finley was an active and laborious pastor; an accurate Biblical expounder and effective preacher; an ardent friend of education, and zealous in the promotion of Christian liberality.

Decided in his opinions, and impulsive and untiring in the accomplishment of what he conceived to be best, he incurred at length the opposition of a majority of his congregation, and after much conflict of opinion, Presbytery dissolved the connection October, 1857. Soon after, some twelve male members and their families, or about forty in all, withdrew and organized the First Reformed Dutch Church of Metuchen.

After leaving here, Mr. Finley took charge of the Presbyterian Institute at Talladega, Ala., where he remained until his death, July 2d, 1860. His remains rest there beneath a beautiful monument which his friends and pupils erected to his memory. He died in the fifty-seventh year of his age. In a notice at the time of his death, the Rev. Mr. McCorkle, Pastor of the Presbyterian Church at Talladega, thus speaks of him:

"As a preacher he was rich in Scriptural truth, plain and chaste in style, free from ostentation in manner, and often impressive and powerful. He was genial and profitable in his intercourse with others, and left on all around him the conviction that he was a good man. He took a deep interest in the religious instruction of the young by means of Bible-classes and Sabbath-schools, and gave great prominence to the Bible as the best book for pupils in our primary and high schools. For the instruction of the negroes he had rare gifts, and in preaching to them took great delight. We can not, need not speak of his closet history; of his family piety; of his liberality to the poor and to the cause of Christ. 'His works will follow him.' He closed a useful life by a peaceful, triumphant death. In view of his heavenly rest, he exclaimed with fainting voice, 'Oh! glorious day.'"

His wife, Mrs. Julia Finley, everywhere so beloved by all who knew her, died at Peoria, Illinois, October 5th, 1863, and is buried there.

In January, 1858, the Rev. Gardiner S. Plumley, of New York city, was called quite unanimously as pastor—was installed April 28th, 1858, and still continues to labor among us acceptably.

Mr. Plumley was born at Washington, D. C.; graduated at Yale College 1850, at Union Theological Seminary, New York, 1855; was Pastor of Bloomingdale Church, New York, for two years, and then settled here. As he is with us and of us, there is no need that we inform you of his social, personal and ministerial qualities. He has twice represented the Presbytery of Elizabeth in the General Assembly, and been active by word and pen in promoting the welfare of the Church at large. Many from time to time have been added to the membership during his ministry here. The winters of 1852–3, and of 1867–8, were seasons of special awakening. At the former about twenty, and at the latter forty united with the church.

Within the last few years the church property has been much improved. A spire was erected upon the church 1863, and the first bell procured June, 1865. The present number of communicants is two hundred and fifty.

In November, 1857, Wm. M. Ross, Ezra M. Hunt, M.D., John Watson and John V. P. Voorhees were added to the Eldership. Benajah Mundy still remains an acting member of session. Elder John H. Campbell removed to Illinois in 1860 and died there in 1861. Melancthon Mundy, so long active as an Elder and Trustee, died in 1859, and Simeon Mundy, who so long served in both these capacities, in 1865. Henry Redfield, who was elected Elder August, 1861, served but for a short time. Wm. W. Ross died June 10th, 1867, much lamented both by the church and the community. Either as Trustee or Elder, and often as both, he had served for many years with self-denying devotion and great usefulness.

In connection with this church, a Sabbath-school has long been maintained under the direction, from time to time, of Mr. W. M. Ross, Mr. Lewis Thomas, Mr. A. W. Marshall and others, and is an important auxiliary to the church.

Besides those who have ministered to us as Pastors, there have been a few from this church who have consecrated themselves to the service of the ministry, and whose names are therefore often recalled by us.

Rev. Joel Campbell, son of Benajah Campbell, united with this church in 1819, soon after the great revival before referred to, and soon turned his attention to the ministry. After graduating at Amherst College and Auburn Theological Seminary, he was licensed by the Elizabeth and Newark Presbytery. He has labored at Honesdale, Carbondale and other points, having organized five churches and

witnessed precious revivals in all of them. He now resides at Lafayette, in the vicinity of former charges, having passed his three-score years and ten, and being compelled by decline of health to resign active ministerial duty. "I am still," says he, "spared, but feeble. I attend a Bible-class of young men connected with our Sabbath-school, help a little in the prayer-meetings, and occasionally preach." Thus he continues to work so long as he can in that vocation to which he was called, and in which all who ever knew him can testify as to his affectionate earnestness and untiring zeal. His name and his memory will ever be cherished by us.

Charles Ross, the son of Richard Ross, formerly an Elder of this church, has devoted most of his life to missionary and colporteur work. For many years past Charlotteville, Va., has been the centre of his field of labor, and he has been permitted to be abundantly useful in his chosen work. Satisfied with this humble and self-denying position, it is but recently that he has been ordained a minister of the Gospel, in order to more fully occupy the territory of which he is the overseer. At about the age of fifty-five, he is still laborious and useful.

Rev. Ezra F. Mundy, the son of Melancthon Mundy, formerly an Elder of this church, was born in 1833; united with this church in 1851; graduated at Rutgers College, New Brunswick, 1852; at Princeton Seminary, 1855, and was licensed by the Presbytery of Elizabethtown, 1855. He was ordained and settled as Pastor of the Presbyterian church at Smithtown, L. I., 1856, and after a useful ministry there, resigned in 1861. He supplied the Presbyterian church of North Salem, N. Y., from 1863 to 1868, and was installed over his present charge, Portchester, N. Y., March 1st, 1868. A clear and effective preacher, an active pastor, and often a teacher to some of the youth of his charge, may he long be spared as God's messenger, and as one of the laborers who has gone forth from amongst us.

Dewitt H. Thomas, son of Lewis and Rachel Clarkson Thomas, was born at Metuchen, October 20th, 1841, and was converted while at school at Bridgeport, Ct., in 1858. He graduated at Williams College with honor August 3d, 1864, entered upon his Theological studies at Union Seminary, New York City, in September of the same year, and died December 1st, 1864, of Tetanus, resulting from a slight wound. Early in his college course, the question of his future duty as to the ministry presented itself to his mind and heart, and after most careful, prayerful, and anxious inquiry, "he came to the full, unreserved consecration of himself to that service which characterized him ever after. He did not wait to begin his work after he should have finished his Theological training, but at once entered with zeal upon preparatory labor as well as preparatory study." By talent, by pleasing address, and by earnest piety suited

for his holy vocation, we had looked forward with pleasure to a life of long activity for Christ, and "in his early grave lie buried fond hopes and cherished affections. But he has gone to that service in heaven which is the reward of the service he intended to have rendered on earth." There are trees which have fruit while yet in their bloom, and we must not complain if some such are transplanted beside the river of the water of life sooner than our human wishes indicate.

Theodore Whitfield Hunt, son of Rev. H. W. Hunt, united with this church April, 1859, graduated with the highest honors of his class at Princeton College, 1865, and after two years of Theological study in Union Seminary, N. Y., and one in the Seminary at Princeton, he was licensed by the Presbytery of Elizabeth, April, 1869. He has thus far declined settlement, and been earnestly employed in his duties as a tutor in Princeton College.

Thomas Reeve, a member of this church, is engaged in preparatory study under the care of the Presbytery.

While we are conscious that too few of those united with us have consecrated themselves to the ministry, yet we cannot but rejoice that some have thus been counted worthy, and we will pray and hope that many more shall yet be found who will give themselves to this best and noblest of all Christian vocations, and labor zealously in word and in doctrine.

In thus reviewing the past history of this church, interesting to us all as so long the only church of our neighborhood, while we cannot but recognize that at times it has been in a "great fight of affliction," yet from the ancient days, and the days of our fathers, it has received great blessings, and a goodly number have been gathered into the fold. Not cherishing undue sectarian feeling, many of other denominations have worshipped with us until the way was clear for separate organization, and thus has been cultivated that harmony of feeling which we believe now exists amongst our different churches.

First Reformed Church of Metuchen.

Next in order of organization was the Reformed Dutch Church of Metuchen, which was formed December 27th, 1857, by a colony of about forty from the Presbyterian church. Smith Bloomfield, Albert Edgar, David Bloomfield and David G. Thomas were chosen as Elders, and Martin Compton, Wm. F. Manning, Henry Weston and Charles E. Bloomfield as Deacons. The present church edifice was soon erected, on land given by D. G. Thomas, and the church dedicated August 5th, 1858, the Rev. Dr. Bethune preaching the sermon.

Rev. J. Bodine Thompson, its first pastor, was installed February 15th, 1859, and resigned November 6th, 1866, to accept a call to the Reformed Church of Tarrytown, N. Y.

Mr. Thompson was the son of Judge J. Thompson, of Readington, Somerset County; a graduate of Rutgers College and of the Theological Seminary at New Brunswick, and having been prominently engaged for a year or two in promoting the educational interests of the public school system of our State, was called to this his first settlement.

He labored amongst us with great acceptance, and his removal was much regretted. He is at present the pastor of the Reformed Church of Saugerties, N. Y. During his ministry here there was a gradual increase of the membership and of the prosperity of the church.

Mr. Smith Bloomfield, so long identified with religious interests here, and the chief contributor to the building of the church, died May, 1865, full of years and of devotion to the service of Christ.

The second pastor, Rev. Nicholas J. M. Bogert, was installed August 14th, 1867, and resigned on account of his health February 1st, 1870. He is a graduate of Rutgers College and of the Theological Seminary at New Brunswick, and entered upon his labors here a few months after his licensure. His ministry has been efficient and faithful, and the membership of the church has gradually increased. The number of communicants is now one hundred and fifteen.

The church parted with their former pastor with much regret, and have just called the Rev. E. Lord, of Adams, Jefferson County, N. Y., who is soon to settle amongst us.

St. Luke's Episcopal Church.

The Protestant Episcopal Church of this place first held service in the house of Mr. H. C. Hardy, but soon after, in 1866, was offered the use of the Lecture-Room of the Reformed Church, where regular service and Sabbath-school were held. In 1867 Rev. Alfred Goldsborough, of Trinity College, Hartford, Ct., and a recent graduate of the Episcopal Theological Seminary, was appointed Rector, and Mr. H. C. Hardy and Nathan Robins, Wardens, and T. W. Strong and others as Vestrymen.

He labored with acceptance for a little over one year, but the number of Episcopal families resident here being small, and the prospect of building a church seemingly delayed, he sought another field of labor.

Soon after, however, by the liberality of Messrs. Strong, N. Robins, Thorn and others, and the faithful superintendence of Rev

Dr. Abercrombie, of Rahway, N. J., the present neat church edifice was erected, and the first service held therein June 30th, 1869.

The present Rector, the Rev. Stephen P. Simpson, was settled May 1st, 1869, and removed here from Newark, N. J.

The church is gradually increasing in membership and attendance, and now numbers about forty communicants.

Centenary Methodist Episcopal Church.

For several years there have been occasional attempts to organize a Methodist Church in this village, and services were had at irregular intervals; but it was not until 1866 that any well-grounded prospect of early success was entertained. In November of that year the Presbyterian Church voted the use of the Academy to this Society for regular service.

In October, 1866, the church was regularly organized as the Centenary Methodist Episcopal Church of Metuchen, and Walter S. Petit, Robert Idell, Isaac M. Whittier, Henry F. Coon, Robert Petit, and Rev. M. Daly signed the certificate of incorporation. From April, 1866, Rev. J. S. Coit, of Woodbridge, became the Stated Supply, and the following Spring Rev. J. L. Gilder, of New Brunswick, succeeded him.

The church now occupied was commenced September, 1868, finished at a cost of between six and seven thousand dollars, and dedicated April 1st, 1869. A Sabbath-school was opened soon after.

Rev. E. G. Thomas, a recent graduate of Rutgers College, was at once appointed by the Conference as the first settled minister. He gave promise of efficient usefulness, but a bronchial affection of the throat compelled his resignation during the Summer.

Rev. J. J. Reed, a Professor in Pennsylvania Military Academy, was appointed as his successor, and settled here October 1st, 1869, and labored with much acceptance until recently.

New families have moved into the town and the zealous efforts of the founders have been continued, so that steady growth has been secured, and the membership now numbers seventy-one.

Our respected fellow-citizen, the Rev. Edward Wilson, has just been appointed to the Pastorate.

As the Piscataway Baptist Church is only a little over two miles from us, and is now included within our township, a reference to it is proper; but needs only to be brief, since a narrative of its interesting history is soon to be prepared.

Like the early settlers of Woodbridge township, its early inhabitants brought some religion with them, and although few were Baptists, these seem to have been more active than the rest.

A statement as to the old churches of New Jersey, which I have, makes the church there to have been established in 1680.

At a town meeting, January 18th, 1685–6, it was agreed "that a meeting-house should be built forthwith, the dimensions as follows: 20 foot wide, 30 foot longe, and 10 foot between joynts." This house, it is supposed, was erected at Piscataway town. The first house of worship built was erected in 1748, on or very near the site of the present house. Its size was 40x36. This house was taken down in 1824 and a new and more commodious one was dedicated in 1825. This stood till January, 1851, when it took fire and was burned to the ground. The present house was erected in the same year.

The Pastor for fifty years or more, and up to about 1739, was John Drake, one of the early settlers. He was succeeded in 1739 by Benjamin Stelle, of Huguenot ancestry, who remained as Pastor for twenty years, and was in 1759 succeeded by Isaac Stelle, who was Pastor for twenty-two years. In 1783 Reune Runyon commenced his Pastorate, which continued for twenty-eight years, or to about 1812. Vincent Rognion was among the early settlers, and the surname is the same.

The sturdy character of the manifold descendants of all the Drakes, Stelles and Runyons above named, who have from that time onward to the present formed so excellent a portion of the inhabitants of that township, help to contradict that proverbial slander, that ministers' sons and deacons' daughters have more original sin, and are inclined to more actual transgression than the rest of mankind.

As to its later ministers, and manifold items of interest in the history of this old and well-sustained Christian society, they will be found in a historical sketch soon to be furnished by Rev. James T. Brown, D.D., the present able and esteemed Pastor.

Thus, by the various churches and denominations in our midst, and by an active and efficient ministry, we are all provided with suitable means of grace.

Free from many of the embarrassments with which our predecessors have been compelled to struggle, we may all of us surely say: "The lines have fallen unto us in pleasant places, and we have a goodly heritage." We have entered into fields where others have labored, and where fruit abounds; but there is fallow ground yet to be broken, seed yet to be sown, culture-toil to be endured and harvests yet to be gathered. The earnest suppliant, the willing worker, and a spirit-seeking, Christ-loving, God-trusting people will not fail to labor on for the welfare of Zion, and to co-operate together with Pastors and with each other for the training of the lambs of the flock, for the regeneration of sinners, for the upbuilding of each member, until all shall become, more and more, wit-

nesses for the truth, and illumined by Him who is the true light, each church shall be as a branch of the golden candlestick, lighting multitudes to the altars of our God.

The oldest, around which clusters the historic associations of two centuries, is glad, in Christian charity, to greet the younger as sisters, that one and all together may unite in affording spiritual privileges to our community, and in exerting that moral and Christian influence which is the surest pledge both of temporal and spiritual prosperity.

We have thus completed a review of over two hundred years, with facts and incidents having relation both to our general and religious history. It has not been without some pains-taking that I have collected from obscure and scattered sources the items which go to make up a reliable record of the past; but I have done it with the more patience because I believed, as I now already have reason to know, that it would be gratifying to you, and would rescue from oblivion memories of the olden time, and of men identified with it, worthy to be cherished and preserved by our present and future inhabitants.

It is an advantage to any place to be able to refer to historic associations and to honorable successes, which are a part of itself, and as such ought to be esteemed, and I take it not so much as a personal compliment as an evidence of your appreciation of your own worthy history and regard for the honor of our town, that you have so attentively listened to these addresses, necessarily dealing with some matters in detail and in a way not adapted for popular recital. And I am sure that, with myself, many of you have felt devout occasion of gratitude to God for the character of our early settlers, and for those civil and religious privileges and blessings which have been so multiplied.

I have presented to you a sketch of our actual past. It was kindly proposed to me since our meeting night before last, that I should speak of our possible future. It is a prolific subject for a whole lecture, and I would avail myself of the suggestion, but I have already occupied your attention as long as my judgment will excuse.

With a humble appreciation of our manifold, ancestral, material and moral advantages as men and women of the present, we will burnish anew the shields and ensigns armorial of our historic arsenal, and with liberality and unity of spirit worthy of our fair record, and worthy of those who with equal claims have settled amongst us, let us, with good feeling and good faith, here and now make good resolve that we will do what we can to add the present as an ornament to the past, and secure to our posterity a future that they can cherish and enjoy.

Thus in a humble degree may we hope to make worthy use of

those precious privileges which have been vouchsafed to us in this goodly land, and when this valley shall teem with larger population, and these hills be all dotted over with cottages and homes, the streets you have added, the trees you have planted, the adornments you have planned, the churches and schools you have supported, and all the refining and elevating influences which you have helped to cultivate, will still remain as a worthy inheritance for the coming generations.

And now let blessings be upon the spot which the Grand Sachem of the Raritans called Metuchen, or the Rolling Land, and where Metuchen, the chief of the rolling land, had his hunting-grounds, and smoked, amid his Indian group, the pipe of peace; upon the people who now inhabit the district where Puritan and Covenanter afterward made common cause for Christianity and liberty, and upon all hereafter casting in their lot with us, who are ready to help us maintain the honor of the past, and to aid by sympathy and co-operative zeal in whatever contributes to material, social and moral advancement.

METUCHEN, *April*, 1870.

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